

Danes in Wessex

The Scandinavian Impact on Southern England, c. 800–c. 1100



edited by

RYAN LAVELLE & SIMON ROFFEY

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Ryan Lavelle
Simon Roffey



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Front cover: Winchester Cathedral, the north screen of the presbytery, 1525, with the tomb of Harthacnut, looking south-east. (Photograph © John Crook); inset: 'King Alfred and the Danes' by Andrew Brown Donaldson, c.1890 (Courtesy of Winchester City Museums Art Collection).

Back cover: Trefoil brooch from Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire, provided courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

Contents

Editorial Preface	vii
Foreword	ix
<i>Barbara Yorke</i>	
List of Contributors	x
List of Abbreviations	xi
List of Illustrations	xiii
1. Introduction: Danes in Wessex	1
<i>Ryan Lavelle and Simon Roffey</i>	
2. West Saxons and Danes: Negotiating Early Medieval Identities	7
<i>Simon Roffey and Ryan Lavelle</i>	
3. The Place of Slaughter: Exploring the West Saxon Battlescape	35
<i>Thomas J. T. Williams</i>	
4. A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses	56
<i>Derek Gore</i>	
5. Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex: Towards a Reassessment of Anglo-Saxon Strategic Landscapes	70
<i>John Baker and Stuart Brookes</i>	
6. Scandinavian-style Metalwork from Southern England: New Light on the 'First Viking Age' in Wessex	87
<i>Jane Kershaw</i>	
7. Death on the Dorset Ridgeway: The Discovery and Excavation of an Early Medieval Mass Burial	109
<i>Angela Boyle</i>	

8.	Law, Death and Peacemaking in the ‘Second Viking Age’: An Ealdorman, his King, and some ‘Danes’ in Wessex	122
	<i>Ryan Lavelle</i>	
9.	Thorkell the Tall and the Bubble Reputation: The Vicissitudes of Fame	144
	<i>Ann Williams</i>	
10.	A Place in the Country: Orc of Abbotsbury and Tole of Tolpuddle, Dorset	158
	<i>Ann Williams</i>	
11.	Danish Landowners in Wessex in 1066	172
	<i>C. P. Lewis</i>	
12.	Danish Royal Burials in Winchester: Cnut and his Family	212
	<i>Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle[†]</i>	
13.	Some Reflections on Danes in Wessex Today	250
	<i>Lillian Céspedes González</i>	
	Select Bibliography	263
	Index	269

Editorial Preface

This volume stems from a conference of the same title, which we ran at the University of Winchester as part of the Wessex Centre for History and Archaeology's programme in September 2011. New work on the early middle ages, not least the excavations of mass graves associated with the Viking Age in Dorset and Oxford, was beginning to draw attention to the gaps in our understanding of the wider impact of Scandinavians in areas of Britain not traditionally associated with them, and that a multidisciplinary – at times interdisciplinary – approach to the problems of their study was required to be applied to the Wessex region. Our tentative plans to publish the papers delivered at the conference were given a boost when Martin Biddle was able to confirm that he and Birthe Kjolbye-Biddle's English translation of their contribution to *Danske Kongegrave* – a major work on Danish royal graves, due to go to press at the time of writing – could be made available for our volume. We are delighted that all those who spoke at the conference have been able to present versions of their papers as chapters here but we have solicited further contributions, especially from those who, for a variety of reasons, were unable to speak at the conference. We are grateful to all of the contributors for their hard work, as well as their copious quantities of patience, good humour and forbearance.

Editing this book has incurred a number of further debts of gratitude: Michael Hicks, David Hinton, and Barbara Yorke were instrumental in their encouragement and advice when organising the original conference, and we are especially grateful to Barbara Yorke for her advice at many points during the gestation of this volume and for kindly providing a foreword. Clare Litt and her colleagues at Oxbow Books have been extremely accommodating in helping bring this volume together, and in answering many technical queries. Our colleague Kate Weikert provided an invaluable final reading of the complete manuscript, which saved us from a number of infelicities. We also wish to record our thanks to Richard Abels, John Crook, Carey Fleiner, Charles Insley, Janine Lavelle, Duncan Probert, David Score, Sarah Semple, Gabor Thomas, Nick Thorpe, Katie Tucker, and Andrew Wareham.

Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society – whose generous grant has allowed a number of illustrations in this volume to be reproduced in colour – as well as the financial and institutional support of the Archaeology and History Departments of the University of Winchester.

Ryan Lavelle
Simon Roffey
Winchester, September 2015

Foreword

There have been many studies of the Scandinavians in Britain, but this, so far as I know, is the first collection of essays to be devoted solely to their engagement with Wessex. It must be welcomed as an important contribution to wider debates concerning Anglo-Scandinavian relations in the ninth to eleventh centuries. While there may not have been the same degree of impact, discernable particularly in place-names and archaeology, as in those areas of Britain which had substantial influxes of Scandinavian settlers, Wessex was a major theatre of the Viking wars in the reigns of Alfred and Æthelred Unræd. The succession of Cnut brought the Danish king and his court into the heart of Wessex, with some of his countrymen becoming major landowners and royal agents. These two major topics, the Viking wars and the Danish landowning elite, figure strongly in the collection, but are not its exclusive concern, nor the sole reasons for the presence of Danes, or items associated with them,

in Wessex. Multi-disciplinary approaches mean that Vikings and Danes are evoked not just through the written record, but through their impact on real and imaginary landscapes and via the objects they owned or produced. Some never returned home, with, at one extreme, the executed Scandinavians of the Dorset Ridgeway, and, at the other, the burials of Cnut and members of his family and court in Winchester. The papers raise wider questions which the editors explore in their joint contribution. When did aggressive Vikings morph into more acceptable Danes, and what issues of identity were there for natives and incomers in a province whose founders were believed to have also come from North Sea areas, if not from parts of Denmark itself? Readers can continue for themselves aspects of these broader debates that will be stimulated by this fascinating and significant series of studies by both established scholars and new researchers. Read, enjoy and think!

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List of Abbreviations

<i>AB</i>	<i>Annales Bertiani</i> , ed. G. Waitz, MGH <i>Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum</i> 5 (Hannover, 1883); trans. J. L. Nelson, <i>The Annals of St Bertin</i> (Manchester, 1991); cited by annal year
<i>Æthelweard, Chronicon</i>	<i>Chronicon Æthelweardi: The Chronicle of Æthelweard</i> , ed. and trans. A. Campbell (London, 1962)
<i>ANS</i>	Various editors, <i>Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies</i> 1978 <i>etc.</i> (Woodbridge, 1979 <i>etc.</i>); cited by volume number and conference year
<i>ASC</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i> . Text edited in <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition</i> , general eds D. N. Dumville and S. D. Keynes (Woodbridge, 9 vols published, 1983–present). Unless otherwise noted, translations are cited from D. Whitelock, D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker, <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: a Revised Translation</i> (London, 1961; rev. 1965); entries are cited by MS where versions differ substantially and, unless otherwise noted, the corrected annal year assigned by Whitelock <i>et al.</i>
<i>ASE</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i> ; cited by volume and year
<i>Asser</i>	<i>Asser's Life of King Alfred Together with the Annals of Saint Neots Erroneously Ascribed to Asser</i> , ed. W. H. Stevenson (Oxford, 1906); cited by chapter and page
<i>ASSAH</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History</i> ; cited by volume and year
<i>BAR</i>	British Archaeological Reports
<i>Bede, HE</i>	Bede, <i>Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum: Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> , ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969); cited by book, chapter and page
<i>BL</i>	British Library
<i>CG</i>	Continental Germanic
<i>DB</i>	Domesday Book Phillimore county edition (J. Morris [general ed.], Chichester, 1975–86); referred to by county volume and cited by entry number
<i>EETS</i>	Early English Text Society
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>EMC</i>	<i>Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds; Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles</i> , hosted by the Department of Coins and Medals, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge < http://www-cm.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/emc/ >
<i>EME</i>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
<i>Exon</i>	Exon Domesday, in <i>Libri Censualis, vocati Domesday Book, Additamenta ex Codic. Antiquiss. Exon Domesday; Inquisitio Eliensis; Liber Winton; Boldon Book</i> , ed. H. Ellis (London, 1816); entries cited according to folio, with a or b (for <i>recto</i> or <i>verso</i>) and the number accorded to the entry on that page
<i>GDB</i>	Great Domesday Book, in <i>Great Domesday</i> , general ed. R. W. H. Erskine, Alecto Historical Editions (London, 1986–92); reference given by folio, column, and, where appropriate, cited place-name
<i>JW</i>	<i>The Chronicle of John of Worcester: Volume II: The Annals from 450–1066</i> , ed. and trans. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk (Oxford, 1995); cited by annal and page
<i>LDB</i>	<i>Little Domesday Book</i> , ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin, Alecto Historical Editions (London, 6 vols, 2000).

MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
NMR	English Heritage National Monuments Record < http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/nmr/ >
OE	Old English
ON	Old Norse
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
PAS	Portable Antiquities Scheme < http://finds.org.uk >
PASE	King's College London and University of Cambridge, <i>Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England</i> < http://www.pase.ac.uk >
PDE	King's College London, <i>Profile of a Doomed Elite: The Structure of English Landed Society in 1066</i> research project; results integrated into PASE database
RFA	'Royal Frankish Annals': <i>Annales Regni Francorum</i> , ed. F. Kurze, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum (Hannover, 1895); trans. P. D. King, <i>Charlemagne: Translated Sources</i> (Kendall, 1987)
RS	Rolls Series
Sawyer, <i>Charters</i>	Citation of charter, catalogued in <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography</i> , ed. P. H. Sawyer, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 8 (London, 1968); revised version ed. S. E. Kelly, R. Rushforth <i>et al.</i> , for the <i>Electronic Sawyer: Online Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Charters</i> website, King's College London < http://www.esawyer.org.uk >
TRE	<i>Tempore Regis Edwardi</i> ('at the time of King Edward [the Confessor]')
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
VCH	<i>Victoria County History</i> (London, 1901–); volumes cited according to county and volume number
WM, <i>De ant. Glas.</i>	William of Malmesbury, <i>De antiquitate Glastonie ecclesie</i> , in <i>The Early History of Glastonbury: an Edition, Translation, and Study of William of Malmesbury's 'De antiquitate Glastonie ecclesie'</i> , ed. and trans. J. Scott (Woodbridge, 1981)
WM, <i>GRA</i>	William of Malmesbury, <i>Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings, Volume 1</i> , ed. and trans. R. M. Thomson, M. Winterbottom and R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford, 1998); cited by chapter, passage and page number; <i>Volume II: Introduction and Commentary</i> , ed. R. M. Thomson (Oxford, 1999) is cited as 'Vol. 2'

List of Illustrations

Figures

- 2.1. Grave Slab (CG WS 104.2) and marker (CG WS 104.1) over the grave of Gunni, as found during the Old Minster excavations, looking north-east. (Photograph by J. W. Hopkins III, © Winchester Excavations Committee)
- 2.2. Photograph and drawing of fragment with runic inscription of the word 'Huskarl', re-used in the tower of St Maurice's, Winchester (H: c.92 mm, W: c.177 mm, L: c.185 mm, Diam. of curve: c.430 mm). (Courtesy of Winchester Excavations Committee and Winchester City Council)
- 2.3. Queen Emma and King Cnut presenting a gold cross, in the early eleventh-century *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, Winchester (BL MS Stowe 944, fol. 6r). (© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved)
- 3.1. Map of the region around Edington and Bratton, Wiltshire, from the first edition Ordnance Survey County Series 1:10560 (1889). (© Crown Copyright and Database Right 2013. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence))
- 3.2. Bratton Camp. Detail of the environs of Bratton Camp and Warden's Down.
- 3.3. Edington Hill. Detail of the region around Edington Hill.
- 4.1. Places in western England discussed in the text.
- 5.1. The Vikings in England as revealed in narrative sources.
- 5.2. Named *herepædas* in the Avebury region, Domesday settlement pattern and sites mentioned in the text.
- 5.3. Occurrences of *herepæd* and related compounds in England.
- 5.4. Yatesbury, Wiltshire. Photograph of the west-facing section of the ditch cut around the modified Bronze Age mound. (Image courtesy of Andrew Reynolds)
- 5.5. Possible late Anglo-Saxon mustering sites in England.
- 5.6. Plan of the 'hanging promontory' site by Moot Hill adjacent to the shire boundary of Dorset and Somerset, with photograph of the views south from the meeting-place over northern Dorset.
- 6.1. Trefoil brooch from Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.2. Strap-slide from Hannington, Hampshire. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.3. Tongue-shaped brooch from Prestegården, Vestfold, Norway. (After E. Wamers, 'Eine Zungenfibel aus dem Hafen von Haithabu', fig. 11, 1)
- 6.4. Strap-slide and strap-end from Wharram Percy, Yorkshire. (After A. R. Goodall and C. Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects', figs 61, 22 and 23)
- 6.5. Strap-end from Mudford, Somerset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.6. Tongue-shaped brooch from Eketorp, Sweden. (© Stockholm Historiska Museet)
- 6.7. Strap-end from St Leonards and St Ives, Dorset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.8. Finger-ring found near Shaftesbury, Dorset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.9. Silver ingot from Headbourne Worthy, Hampshire. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.10. Silver ingot from Over Compton, Dorset. (Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum)
- 6.11. Inset lead weight from Kingston, Dorset. (© The Trustees of the British Museum)
- 6.12. Enamel offcut from Winterbourne Zelston, Dorset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.13. Carolingian sword belt mount from Wareham, Dorset. (© The Trustees of the British Museum)
- 6.14. Bridle mount from Ashburton, Devon. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
- 6.15. Distribution of Scandinavian-type metalwork in Wessex. (© Jane Kershaw)
- 6.16. All early medieval metal work from the south-west recorded by the PAS, shown against modern constraints on metal-detecting. (© Jane Kershaw)

- 7.1. Location of the Ridgeway Hill site. (Image courtesy of Oxford Archaeology)
- 7.2. The full extent of the skeletal deposit within the pit. (Image courtesy of Oxford Archaeology)
- 7.3. An eleventh-century depiction of Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son, Isaac (BL MS Cotton Claudius B.IV, fol. 38r.). (© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved)
- 7.4. The Harley Psalter's depiction of torture and a mound apparently containing decapitated corpses (BL MS Harley 603, fol. 67r.). (© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved)
- 7.5. Skeleton 3806: the decapitated skeleton of the individual who was probably the first to be executed and deposited in the pit. (Image courtesy of Oxford Archaeology)
- 8.1. View of Portland and its harbour from Ridgeway Hill. (Photograph © Bob Ford 2004, <http://www.natureportfolio.co.uk>)
- 10.1. Map of Lands of Orc and Abbotsbury, in their respective hundreds. (Map drawn by Ryan Lavelle with boundaries of the hundreds redrawn from the Alecto Domesday Map, with permission of Alecto Historical Editions)
- 11.1. Landed estates of selected magnates. (Map drawn by Duncan Probert)
- 11.2. Landed estates of selected great landowners. (Map drawn by Duncan Probert)
- 12.1. Winchester Cathedral from the air. The excavation of the Anglo-Saxon Old Minster in progress, 1966, looking east. (Photograph R. C. Anderson. © Winchester Excavations Committee)
- 12.2. Looking west down the axis of the plan of Old Minster laid out in modern brickwork along the north side of the nave of Winchester Cathedral. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.3. Winchester in 1093: Old Minster, New Minster, and the east end of the new Norman cathedral, as they were on 15 July 1093, the day before the start of the demolition of Old Minster. (Drawn by Nicholas Griffiths. © Winchester Excavations Committee)
- 12.4. Old Minster: reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral as it was between 992–4 and 1093, axonometric view, looking north-west. (Drawn by Simon Hayfield. © Winchester Excavations Committee)
- 12.5. Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture from Old Minster showing what may be the episode of Sigmund and the Wolf from Volsungasaga. (Photograph R. C. Anderson. © Winchester Excavations Committee)
- 12.6. Winchester Cathedral: (A) The Norman presbytery as built 1079–93, showing the suggested positions of the Anglo-Danish royal graves. (B) The presbytery after the reconstruction of c.1310–15, showing the same graves in their new positions. (Drawn by Hamish Robertson and Simon Hayfield. © Winchester Excavations Committee)
- 12.7. Winchester Cathedral, looking west from the retrochoir towards the early fourteenth-century screen commemorating benefactors at the east end of the presbytery. The entrance to 'The Holy Hole' is in the middle. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.8. The south screen of the presbytery, 1525, with the tomb of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror under the further of the two arched niches, looking north-east. On top of the screen are two of Bishop Fox's chests of 1525, the further one containing the supposed bones of King Edmund (d.1016). (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.9. The tomb of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror, c.1525 and earlier. The Latin inscription of 1525 wrongly identifies Richard as *BEORNIE DVCIS*, 'Duke of Beornia'. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.10a. The second half of the inscription on the later twelfth-century Purbeck marble tomb-slab of Earl Beorn and Richard, son of 'King William the Elder', reading REGI S : FILI : ET : BEORN : DVX : [floral scroll] (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.10b. The second half of the inscription on the later twelfth-century Purbeck marble tomb-slab of Edmund Ironside, reading [Eþ]ELDREDI : REGIS : FILIVS : (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.11. The tomb of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror, original drawing by F. J. Baigent when their tomb was opened on 27 May 1887. Winchester Cathedral Archives (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.12. The inscription on the lead coffin of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror, facsimile made by F. J. Baigent when their tomb was opened on 27 May 1887. (From Warren, *Illustrated Guide to Winchester* (1909), p. 65)
- 12.13. Winchester Cathedral, the northernmost niches of the early fourteenth-century screen, with bases for the statuettes of King Æthelred, King Edward the Confessor, King Cnut, and King Harthacnut. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.14. Winchester Cathedral, inscriptions identifying the bases of lost statuettes of 'Cnutus Rex' and

- 'Hardecnutus Rex, filius eius' in the northernmost niche of the early fourteenth-century screen. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.15. Winchester Cathedral, the mortuary chest of 1661 on top of the south screen of the presbytery, beside the bishop's throne, looking south-west. The chest, a replacement of 1661 following the sack of 1642, is said to contain the remains of Cnut and Emma. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.16. The north side of the northern mortuary chest of 1661, showing the inscription added between 1684 and 1692. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.17. Winchester Cathedral, the mortuary chests on top of the north screen of the presbytery, looking north-east. The nearest chest, a replacement of 1661 following the sack of 1642, is said to contain the remains of Cnut and Emma. (Photograph copyright © John Crook)
- 12.18. The north side of the southern mortuary chest of 1661, said in the inscription to contain the remains of the bones of Kings Cnut and Rufus, of Queen Emma, and Bishops Wine and Ælfwine. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.19. The northern mortuary chest of 1661, showing the bones, said to include those of Cnut and Emma, placed in the oak chest provided in 1932, looking west. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.20. The southern mortuary chest of 1661, showing the bones, said to include those of Cnut and Emma, placed in the pine chest provided in 1932, looking east. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.21. The north screen of the presbytery, 1525, with the tomb of Harthacnut, looking south-east. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 12.22. The tomb of Harthacnut, c.1525. (Photograph © John Crook)
- 13.1. Tableau from the Alfredian millenary celebrations of 1901, depicting Anglo-Saxons and Vikings at the Battle of Edington (878). (Reproduced from A. Bowker, *The King Alfred Millenary* (London, 1902), facing p. 178)
- 13.2. A Southampton-based depiction of Viking culture: *Skragbeard and the Vikings* (Void Studios), by Tim Hall. (© Tim Hall; reproduced with permission)
- 13.3. Thorkell the Tall's force heading across Wessex, from *Vinland Saga* vol. 3, by Makoto Yukimura. (*Vinland Saga* © Makoto Yukimura/Kodansha, Ltd., All rights reserved)
- 13.4. Words chosen for their associations with Vikings from online survey, recorded by frequency of response.
- 13.5. A summary of issues cited in survey respondents' views of Vikings (from online survey, recorded by frequency of response)

Tables

- 10.1. Lands of Orc and Abbotsbury, with total holdings in hides and virgates.
- 11.1. The Danish magnates of Wessex TRE.
- 11.2. TRE holdings of Azur son of Thorth.
- 11.3. TRE holdings of Bondi the staller.
- 11.4. TRE holdings of Carl.
- 11.5. TRE holdings of Mærleswein.
- 11.6. TRE holdings of Saxi the housecarl.
- 11.7. TRE holdings of Wigot of Wallingford.
- 11.8. TRE holdings of Esgar the staller.
- 11.9. TRE holdings of Siward Barn.
- 11.10. TRE holdings of Aki the Dane.
- 11.11. TRE holdings of Osgot of Hailes.
- 11.12. The Danish great landowners of Wessex TRE.
- 11.13. The Danish greater thegns of Wessex TRE.
- 11.14. The Danish lesser thegns of Wessex TRE.
- 11.15. The Danish rich peasants of Wessex TRE.
- 11.16. TRE holdings of Tholf the Dane.
- 11.17. TRE holdings of John the Dane.
- 12.1. The burial places of the rulers of Wessex and England, 899–1100, and of Denmark, c.986–1042.
- 12.2. Genealogy of the houses of England, Denmark, and Normandy, 959–1135.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Danes in Wessex

Ryan Lavelle and Simon Roffey

In many ways the title of this volume draws attention to the problems associated with the perception of the Viking Age in the south of England. While scholars commonly deal with the vocabulary of ‘the Danelaw’ and ‘Anglo-Scandinavian England’ when discussing the east Midlands and northern England, Wessex, for understandable reasons, is an area which is often treated as remaining ‘Anglo-Saxon’ throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period. This is hardly surprising. The narrative of the ninth and tenth centuries is one of the resistance of the rulers of Wessex against Viking invaders and the eventual imposition of a notion of an ‘English’ identity, that of the *Angelcynn*, over parts of the rest of England.¹

The survival of the West Saxon dynasty is one of the ‘great’ themes of early medieval English history and it would be perverse if the title of this book were to have been something like *Anglo-Scandinavian Wessex* or even *Viking Wessex* (to our publisher’s credit, this title was never suggested to us). The notion of ‘Danes in Wessex’, which was the title of the conference from which many of the papers in this volume are drawn, is deliberately unspecific, reflecting the range of ways in which the papers in this volume have interpreted its theme. The lack of a definite article in the title is intentional: we cannot speak of *the* Danes in Wessex because the notion of ‘Danes’, as discussed in our other joint contribution to this volume (Chapter 2), often seems to have been semantically fluid, encompassing members of

‘Viking’ warbands and settlers who may not just have come from Scandinavia, let alone Denmark; such groups of ‘Danes’ are likely to have included other Scandinavians (especially Norwegians, as noted in Lavelle’s own contribution (Chapter 8), but also those from north of the Arctic Circle), those from the ‘Danelaw’ regions of Britain and other areas associated with the Viking diaspora such as the Baltic states and Belarus, as well as those who actually came from the provinces of the Danish polities (notwithstanding that these were somewhat different from the twenty-first-century *Kongeriget Danmark*).² Again, this is probably understandable, as the volume covers three centuries of early medieval history, during which one could hardly expect notions of identity to remain static. (We might note too that notions of ‘Wessex’ could vary; this is an issue which is touched on in our own contribution to this volume but we have not proscribed our contributors’ definitions of the region/s, as its geographical variations over three centuries are not insignificant.)

‘Danes’ were *in* Wessex, then, and while there was no ‘Danish’ Wessex, there were close links between West Saxons and Danes in the early middle ages. These links were not necessarily hostile. The earliest known reference to Denmark, as *Denamearc*, is, famously, in a vernacular West Saxon version of the work of the late Roman historian Paulus Orosius, *The Seven Books of Histories against the Pagans*, amongst added details of northern voyages,

recounted at the West Saxon court by a Norwegian chieftain, Ohthere (ON Óttarr).³ Before the Viking Age, as Barbara Yorke noted, the presence at *Hamwic* (Anglo-Saxon Southampton) of eighth-century 'Wodan/monster' *sceattas* – coins which 'may' have been minted in Ribe, Denmark – 'imply that the Norwegian marauders [of c.789] may not have been the first Scandinavian ships to land in Wessex'.⁴ Still, it is the influences of the 'Viking Age' in Wessex which ensure that the topic of this book is a valid one, determined by two 'Viking Ages' in the region:⁵ the 'First Viking Age' in the second half of the ninth century, traditionally seen to have tailed off in southern England in the early tenth century as the successor of King Alfred, Edward the Elder, took the initiative – perhaps through the support of his sister, Æthelflæd, 'Lady of the Mercians' – by seizing control of areas of the former Danelaw. (Inside the frontiers of Wessex itself the first Viking Age might be said to have ended with the whimper of the night flight of the renegade member of the West Saxon dynasty, dubbed the 'king of the pagans' (*rex paganorum*) because of his alliances with Danes, Æthelwold, from Wimborne, Dorset, in 899 or 900, though Wessex was hardly unaffected in the aftermath.⁶) The activities of the 'Second Viking Age' in the later tenth century, which had a direct impact on Wessex, led to the establishment of a Danish dynasty in England, centred on Winchester, as a consequence of the conquest of Cnut 'the Great', son of the Danish ruler Swein Forkbeard, in 1016, with the further influence of Danes in Wessex for at least the next thirty years, arguably the next fifty.

Those two Viking Ages have tended to shape our perceptions of Danish influence in Wessex, and they have often been treated separately, or with the sense that the resistance successfully put up by Alfred the Great as a consequence of campaigns across Hampshire, Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire during the 870s and other campaigns on the outer parts of what might be termed 'Greater Wessex' in Kent in the 890s can be contrasted with the less successful resistance of the English during the reign

of Æthelred II ('the Unready'), during which a series of brief 'hit and run' raids rapidly gave way to a series of longer campaigns, with tragic consequences for the king and his kingdom. Depending on their relative temperaments, modern commentators have been more or less vituperative in their criticism for Æthelred and high-flown in their praise for Alfred, but it should be noted that there is continuity to the Viking Age in Wessex that we should acknowledge. Alfred may have been successful in the campaigns of the late ninth century but the Viking *impact* was not without significance. There were a small number of 'Danes' who lived peacefully in Wessex as a consequence of the actions of the ninth century, whose presence should not be forgotten,⁷ but lest this consideration be seen as a radical attempt to unpick a neatly sewn West Saxon history, it is perhaps better to consider the impact itself, for which the broader themes of the two Viking Ages emerge. The Old Minster in Winchester's lease of some of its land and stock to the king, at what appears to have been unfavourable terms,⁸ provides a parallel with the actions of ecclesiastical landholders in the reign of Æthelred II, during which land was, somewhat more infamously, sold by the likes of Christ Church Canterbury in order to raise money to pay geld.⁹ Although the parallel is not a new one, it is worth bearing in mind the larger number of surviving charters from the late tenth and early eleventh centuries in comparison to those of the late ninth and early tenth, so those earlier examples from Winchester may represent a much wider phenomenon.

Another theme is of course that of Alfred and his sons' emergence as a powerful dynasty. While comparisons with Æthelred here are – as has been noted – the stock-in-trade of the late Anglo-Saxonist, parallels with the dynasty of Cnut are less common in terms of consideration of Wessex. With a sense of the primacy of Winchester within Wessex, as we shall see in the following chapter, Cnut may have underwritten the history of the English dynasty in the early eleventh century, at a time when, under Æthelred, London had become

more important.¹⁰ Although we should probably exercise some caution in reading Alfred's direct role in the importance of Winchester, there may be something of a parallel in the manner in which the ninth-century decline of *Hamwic*, perhaps under the pressure of its vulnerability to Viking raids, allowed its smaller neighbour to emerge as an administrative and cultural centre during the course of the ninth century.¹¹

Indeed, it may be noted that while we may still not talk in terms of an Anglo-Scandinavian society in Wessex prior to 1016 (although, as Jane Kershaw shows in chapter 5, Scandinavian material influences were greater than was once thought), the very fact that Alfred and his successors' hands were strengthened makes late Anglo-Saxon Wessex itself a *direct* product of the Viking Age. There is a certain dichotomy between the written sources, which portray Alfred as a pious Christian and Cnut as a Viking warrior, a dichotomy which should be borne in mind when considering their respective impacts upon Wessex and England. Arguably these figures had much more in common than is often acknowledged. Where West Saxon elites had asserted themselves over Britons in the earlier ninth century and Alfred the warrior king had made far more use and reference to the Anglo-Scandinavian roots of his dynasty than the image makers who shaped our picture of the 'Alfredian court' would have him doing,¹² Cnut and some Danish elites whose positions stemmed from his rule asserted themselves as lords over English men and women, while emphasising their Christian culture. In the employment of a Danish elite culture in the eleventh century, the language of assertion had changed but the political and social frameworks in which it was employed remained, in some ways, very much the same as they had been during the ninth century. Thus, a parallel may be made between West Saxon control in the South-West in the ninth century, recently imposed and at times tenuous, and the attention given to the region by Cnut in the early years of his reign, as he strove to ensure loyalty there in the wake of revolt.¹³

Such assertions of control within West Saxon political frameworks and the demonstration of control in a range of ways by ruling elites, are at the heart of this volume. Though there is, understandably, no consensus of opinion amongst the contributors as to the most significant of the assertions of control in the Viking Age (or the two 'Viking Ages') there is a degree of unity of purpose in the contributions. These encompass the political and social manifestations of 'Danishness' in Wessex, as well as Anglo-Saxon responses to it. Studies of the Viking Age are often nuanced, focusing on the cultural, social and economic effects of the Viking impact in a manner that requires necessary oversight (or at least pausing) of the view of excesses of violence,¹⁴ but an understanding of the violence that underlies that Viking impact remains crucial. While this volume does not hold up an unreconstructed 'back to basics' reading of the relentless violence of hairy barbarians, the place of Viking Age violence and, of course, violence perpetrated by Vikings should not be underestimated. Two of the contributions to this volume, by Thomas Williams (Chapter 3), and by John Baker and Stuart Brookes (Chapter 5), specifically address the military dimensions of responses to the Viking threat, using the region of Wessex as the focus for the study of wider-ranging phenomena, and fulfil something of the expectation of what might be seen in a volume titled *Danes in Wessex*. If any doubt remained as to the violence of the age, Angela Boyle's report on Vikings as victims of violence (Chapter 7) is invaluable.¹⁵ Derek Gore's consideration of the South-West in the ninth and early tenth centuries (Chapter 4), Ryan Lavelle's discussion of West Saxon ealdormen in the late tenth century (Chapter 8), the first of Ann Williams's papers, on the career of a 'Viking' in the early eleventh century (Chapter 9), and indeed some of what follows in our own discussion of manifestations of ethnic identity in Chapter 2 are discussions conceived around the violence of Scandinavian actions, though the violence – whether real or threatened – of incursions, and

the violence of responses underlies each of the papers in this volume. Readers of military history, of a narrative of 'The Viking Threat', should not be too disappointed, then, though if they expect that narrative to fulfil familiar motifs of threat, response, defeat, resistance, salvation, and struggle, they may be. Where the military history is most useful, it is often in terms of consideration within a wider socio-political context. Thomas Williams's contribution considers the experience of the early medieval battlefield and the degree to which shifting cultural expectations in the face of Viking warfare changed the perceptions of the battlefield – and ultimately perceptions of the West Saxon kingdom.¹⁶ His chapter, as with other contributions to this volume, shows the value of multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches in terms of the ways in which archaeological readings of the battlefield go beyond the physical stratigraphic remains, many of which, as Williams notes, do not lend themselves to conventional battlefield archaeology.¹⁷ Baker and Brookes bring to light their experience in running a cutting-edge project on the development of defensive systems in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, using place-name, historical and archaeological evidence.¹⁸ Their contribution to this volume showcases the value of their work in the Wessex region, showing that the violence of responses to external threats could have fundamental infrastructural effects on the development of the kingdom of Wessex and the region of Wessex within the wider tenth- and eleventh-century English kingdom, while showing the manner in which the events of the Viking Age were as much shaped by an existing landscape as the primary factor in shaping it.

Identity, an issue directly linked to notions of the manifestations of political power, is considered in a number of chapters. The identity of Wessex itself is a matter for consideration in our own joint contribution and, to a degree, in Lavelle's discussion of the writing of Ealdorman Æthelweard's history (Chapter 8). Derek Gore's contribution (Chapter 4), a logical projection back from his earlier work on the late tenth century,¹⁹ considers the south-western

provinces of Wessex during the Viking period through to the early tenth century; from Gore's work, one may note the regional differentiation of the western provinces from what became the 'heartlands' of the West Saxon kingdom, a matter of which Vikings were evidently acutely aware.

Gore focuses on the historical sources but underlying his paper is an appropriate feeling for relevant archaeological sites in the region, which are brought to bear in his review of the historical evidence in ways which illuminate both the history and archaeology. A study focusing on the material evidence itself, stemming from a wider research project on Scandinavian metalwork across England,²⁰ is provided by Jane Kershaw in Chapter 6. Looking at the same 'First Viking Age' as Gore, Kershaw's study of recently recovered metalwork from the region reveals that Anglo-Saxon Wessex did appear to have assimilated certain Scandinavian cultural influences. The debate concerns the extent to which such influences were directly due to the Viking presence in the area or via a process of diffusion and interaction with areas of Scandinavian settlement outside of the region. Moreover, what is clear from Kershaw's study is that the spread of such cultural artefacts is not necessarily consistent with the historical sources.

With regard to the so-called 'Second Viking Age', Ann Williams's examination of Thorkell 'the Tall' is one in which the campaigns of Thorkell, outside what is normally considered 'Wessex proper', play a part in the consideration of Thorkell's career and reputation (Chapter 9). As a character who moved into the core of the kingdom of Wessex from such 'peripheral' areas (in West Saxon terms) as Kent and London, Thorkell's actions helped to define West Saxon regional interests even at that late stage of the formation of the English kingdom. Furthermore, given the place of Kent in a wider 'Earldom of Wessex' in the eleventh century (from 1017), its existence directly linked to Thorkell's actions,²¹ and the looming presence of Thorkell over the fate of Wessex in the late Anglo-Saxon period, Thorkell's career in south-eastern England is justified for consideration within this volume.

Martin Biddle and Birtha Kjølbye-Biddle's chapter (Chapter 12) is an English translation of their contribution to the *Danske Kongegrave* project.²² It is relevant here because it tackles elites in a different way from those presented elsewhere in the volume. Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle show that the monumentalisation of the mortal remains of the Anglo-Danish royal family both presented them (and architecturally framed them) within the historical tradition of the West Saxon kingdom whilst also presenting wider and future dynastic pretensions. Bearing in mind the manner in which the post-mortem treatment of these important Danes continued through to and beyond the rebuilt cathedral's consecration in 1093, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle's study also shows the importance of considering the Danish contribution to Wessex within a framework that runs beyond that traditional 'end-point' of 1066.

But while a focus on kings, queens, and 'big men' such as the Vikings Thorkell and Olaf Tryggvason, and the West Saxon ealdormen Odda and Æthelweard can be useful because it allows us to see the influence of significant figures, a focus purely on individuals puts us in danger of sensationalising what is already dramatic enough. If the writing of history shows the manner in which the reading of identity could be something imposed by contemporaries and later generations upon groups of people, it is in the later part of the Viking period (the 'Second Viking Age') that manifestations of identity can be applied to individuals. Chris Lewis's study of Danish landowners (Chapter 11) and Ann Williams's more specific investigation (Chapter 10, her second contribution to this volume) are indications of what made a 'Dane' in the eleventh century: in Lewis's case, around the time of the Norman Conquest and in Williams's, in the aftermath of the Danish conquest of 1016. They are led by the fuller evidence which that period provides: Williams by the charters associated with the Dorset foundations of Orc and Tole; Lewis, by the detailed systematic analysis of Domesday data from the Leverhulme Trust-funded *Profile of a Doomed Elite* project

at King's College London.²³ That chronological specificity makes their conclusions no less valuable for the consideration of Danish identities across the early middle ages. If Lewis is sanguine about the uncertain identity of 'Danes' in Wessex, it is because his study shows a mutable identity. That mutability is a useful rejoinder for the variations of what is meant by 'Danes' throughout the papers in this volume, recalling a much-quoted line by F. W. Maitland: 'we must be careful how we use our Dane.'²⁴ Given the northern and eastern context of Maitland's words, one suspects that he would hardly have approved of an attempt to address Danish influence in the one area of early England that was 'not Danish'. Nonetheless, such care as that urged by Maitland begins when the student of the early middle ages – be they archaeologist or historian – is aware of the manner in which identities could shift. As Lillian Céspedes González, the final contributor to this volume, points out in a short review of modern perceptions of Danes in Wessex (Chapter 13), those shifts of identity did not end with the middle ages but continued – and indeed still continue – to play a part in the ways in which we use our Dane.

Notes

1. S. Foot, 'The Making of *Anglecynn*: English Identity Before the Norman Conquest', *TRHS* 6th Ser. 6 (1996), pp. 25–49.
2. For recent scientific analyses of questions of origin, see T. D. Price, K. M. Frei, A. S. Dobat, N. Lynnerup and P. Bennike, 'Who was in Harold Bluetooth's Army? Strontium Isotope Investigation of the Cemetery at the Viking Age Fortress at Trelleborg, Denmark', *Antiquity* 85 (2011), pp. 476–89, and L. Loe, A. Boyle, H. Webb and D. Score, '*Given to the Ground*': *A Viking Age Mass Grave on Ridgeway Hill, Weymouth* (Dorchester, 2014), pp. 128–29. An insight into the possibility that the diaspora represented by Viking armies included some with English names is provided by Ann Williams, 'Thorkell the Tall and the Bubble Reputation: the Vicissitudes of Fame', below, p. 146.
3. *The Old English Orosius*, ed. J. Bately, EETS Supplementary Ser. 6 (London, 1980), p. 15.
4. B. Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 301–302. More recent finds of this series of coins suggesting minting in Ribe have made Yorke's

- suggestion far more likely: C. Feveile, 'Series X and Coin Circulation in Ribe', in *Studies in Early Medieval Coinage Volume 1: Two Decades of Discovery*, ed. T. Abramson (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 53–67.
5. P. H. Sawyer, 'The Two Viking Ages of Britain: A Discussion', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 2 (1969), pp. 163–76, with discussion and author's response at pp. 176–207.
 6. ASC 899/900, with title in D. N. Dumville and M. Lapidge (eds), *The Annals of St Neots with Vita prima sancti neoti*, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition 17 (Cambridge, 1985), p. 51; the ASC's account of the episode is discussed by T. J. T. Williams, 'Place of Slaughter: Exploring the West Saxon Battlescape', below, pp. 40–41. Note that Derek Gore provides some useful discussion of events in the following years, in 'A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses', below, pp. 64–65.
 7. See S. Roffey and R. Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes: Negotiating Identities in the Early Middle Ages', below, pp. 8, 12.
 8. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1444 (AD 900×8).
 9. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 882 (AD 995 for 994). For discussion of such actions, see N. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), p. 283. Brooks also discusses the ninth-century purchase, by a Kentish ealdorman and his wife, of the 'Golden Gospels', the *Codex Aureus*, from Viking raiders – supposed by Brooks to have been stolen from a Kentish royal minster – and its donation to Christ Church, at pp. 151 and 201–202.
 10. Roffey and Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes', pp. 23–24.
 11. On the decline of *Hamwic*, though not necessarily attributable to Viking attacks, see Yorke, *Wessex*, pp. 112–13. A recent assessment of the increased habitation in the north-western corner of Winchester in this period is B. Ford and S. Teague, with E. Biddulph, A. Hardy and L. Brown, *Winchester, a City in the Making: Archaeological Excavations Between 2002 and 2007 on the Sites of Northgate House, Staple Gardens and the Former Winchester Library, Jewry St* (Oxford, 2011).
 12. This issue was discussed in Prof. Barbara Yorke's lecture "No History, Only Biography": Recreating the Past through Biographies of People, Places, and Things', Timothy Reuter Memorial Lecture, University of Southampton, 5 June 2013 (publication forthcoming).
 13. For this, see M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: the Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London, 1993), p. 89.
 14. See, for example, papers in D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (eds), *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries* (Turnhout, 2000), and D. M. Hadley, *The Vikings in England: Settlement, Society and Culture* (Manchester, 2007). Hadley has recently argued that Scandinavian elite behaviour in England was modified by settlement and encounters with the church: 'Whither the Warrior in Viking Age Towns?', in *Everyday Life in Viking-Age Towns: Social Approaches to Towns in England and Ireland, c.800–1100*, ed. D. M. Hadley and L. Ten Harkel (Oxford, 2013), pp. 103–18, at p. 115.
 15. Though of course the full report (just published at the time of writing), Loe *et al.*, 'Given to the Ground', should now also be consulted.
 16. For an overview of this approach to the study of medieval warfare R. Abels, 'Cultural Representation and the Practice of War in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval Military History* 6 (2008), pp. 1–31. The classic work is J. Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Waterloo, Agincourt and the Somme* (Harmondsworth, 1978).
 17. Williams, 'Place of Slaughter', p. 36.
 18. J. Baker and S. Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age* (Leiden, 2013). Brookes and Baker's contribution to the UCL research project Landscapes of Governance: Assembly Sites in England, 5th to 11th Centuries, <<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/assembly>>, is also important in the formation of their chapter. See further references to their work therein, and in their chapter, below.
 19. D. Gore, 'Britons, Saxons and Vikings in the South West', in *Scandinavia and Europe, 800–1350: Contact, Conflict, and Coexistence*, ed. J. Adams and K. Holman (Turnhout, 2004). Although unpublished at the time of writing, Gore's wider study of the south-western region, *Vikings in the West Country* (Exeter, in press), should also be noted.
 20. J. Kershaw, *Viking Identities: Scandinavian Jewellery in England* (Oxford, 2013).
 21. S. Keynes, 'Cnut's Earls', in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. R. Rumble (London, 1994), pp. 43–88.
 22. *Danske Kongegrave*, ed. K. Kryger (Copenhagen, 2014).
 23. *Profile of a Doomed Elite: the Structure of English Landed Society in 1066*, King's College London <<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/history/research/proj/profile.aspx>> (accessed 7 Mar. 2014).
 24. F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond: Three Essays in the Early History of England* (Cambridge, 1897), p. 139.

CHAPTER TWO

West Saxons and Danes: Negotiating Early Medieval Identities¹

Simon Roffey and Ryan Lavelle

This chapter explores some definitions of ‘West Saxons’ and ‘Wessex’, ‘Danes’ and other Scandinavians, considering their identities in written and material records for the period from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. As may be expected, these identities shifted and were shaped by the influences of a range of different stimuli and social and political interactions, though ‘Dane’ and ‘West Saxon’ remained tangible concepts of identity within Wessex throughout the Viking Age. As part of the consideration of Danish identity in Wessex, the chapter considers the special place of Winchester, proposing that the city’s significance in the eleventh century was primarily due to Danish influence, and that the Anglo-Danish investment in Winchester was linked to its regional identity within Wessex.

Terminology and Identity (i): ‘West Saxons’ and ‘Wessex’

To understand Wessex in the Viking Age, some consideration of pre-Viking Wessex is necessary. West Saxons (*Occidui Saxones*), ‘anciently called’ (*antiquitus ... uocabantur*) the *Gewissae*, were recorded by Bede in the eighth century,² and held a kingdom which had developed some two centuries before Bede wrote. The rulers of the West Saxons subsequently succeeded in incorporating territory on the south coast of England into their kingdom, that of the *Iutae* (normally equated with

Jutes) including the *Meonwara*,³ and occasionally asserted hegemony over Southumbrian England, even extending tributary influence into the north of England for at least a short time in the early ninth century.⁴ Recent work has shown the likely sophistication of the West Saxon kingdom prior to some *adventus danorum*,⁵ but it was arguably the Viking attacks of the ninth century – and, importantly, West Saxon responses to them – which helped to give that region and the social, economic, military and religious institutions within it, their eventual shape through the two centuries that followed.

The Danish impact on Wessex can cast light on the differences within Wessex itself, drawing attention to the fact that it is actually as difficult to pin down what is meant by ‘Wessex’ and ‘West Saxon’ as it is to pin down the ‘Danish’ identities considered in this volume. Although an ‘English’ identity was becoming prevalent in the later Anglo-Saxon period,⁶ identities of ‘West Saxon’ allegiance remained influential, even if they were less frequently predominant. If an ealdorman in East Anglia or Mercia might hold land in and around Winchester in the tenth century or an eleventh-century Earl of Wessex could hold land not only in Wessex but across the south of England,⁷ this may have shown the development of multi-stranded interests amongst the magnate classes (after all, the eleventh-century Earl of Wessex, Godwine, had Sussex origins, an Anglo-Danish marriage,

and a family whose names reflected that range of connections). Such links with the West Saxon *Königslandschaften*, where royal rights and incomes were most prevalent, may have demonstrated the manner in which the different layers of identity might be developed and moulded according to circumstance.⁸ Others, for whom the term 'West Saxon' might have been applied as one of a number of identities, remained linked to Wessex while also linked to other communities, such as the (probably) tenth-century 'bishop of Norway' (*Norwegensis episcopus*), 'Sigefridus', a man with a name which could have been either Old English (as Sigefrith) or Old Norse (Sigurd), who was remembered by William of Malmesbury as one of a number of former monks of Glastonbury who were bishops 'in the time of King Edgar' (*i.e.* 959–75 in Wessex).⁹ Another example is that of Oda, appointed to the West Saxon see of Ramsbury (Wilts.), probably under King Æthelstan (924–39), before his promotion to the archbishopric of Canterbury. According to 'certain people' (*quidam*) reported in the *Vita sancti Oswaldi* (probably composed between 997 and 1002), Oda was the son of an East Anglian Dane, who had settled as a result of fighting on behalf of 'Huba et Hinuuar' (*i.e.* Ubbe and Ívarr 'the Boneless').¹⁰ Writing in late tenth- or early eleventh-century East Anglia, the author of this text, identified as Byrhtferth of Ramsey, was presumably comfortable with highlighting the rumours of the Danish background of the nephew of St Oswald of York, even during the reign of Æthelred II (978–1016).¹¹ Nonetheless, in a West Saxon context, whether or not W. H. Stevenson's suggestion that Asser had met Oda amongst the *pagani* (*i.e.* Danes) in the monastic community at Athelney (Som.) holds water,¹² it is surely significant that someone with Danish connections could be appointed to a position of authority in Wessex.

The picture that is beginning to emerge is one of overlapping identities, with members of communities who could belong to other groups as and when the circumstances suited.¹³ Even if

this is not the place for tracing the mutability of West Saxon identities in detail, it can at least be acknowledged here. It is also an appropriate point to move on to interpretations of possible Danish identities.

Terminology and Identity (ii): 'Danes' and 'Others'

If there was a Danish and/or Scandinavian impact on Wessex in the early middle ages, can it be considered purely in terms of the responses (defensive and otherwise) of those who saw themselves as under threat from 'Danish' incursions? The role of Danes as 'Other' cannot be ignored, and it is in Wessex that what are perhaps the strongest manifestations of this phenomenon may be seen with the execution and mass burial of around fifty individuals on Ridgeway Hill between Dorchester and Weymouth (Dorset), evident in excavation in 2009.¹⁴ The legal context of execution is, of course, crucial, a matter discussed by both Angela Boyle and Ryan Lavelle in this volume. While the excavators of the Ridgeway burials have stressed the inherently 'different' nature of the mass burial of such a large number of individuals, there was nonetheless a judicial dimension to the execution, given its relative proximity to a hundredal boundary.¹⁵

A century or so before the violent deaths of those individuals in Dorset, the West Saxon legal definition of territory in the treaty known as *Alfred–Guthrum* gives another dimension to the West Saxon sense of self and 'other'. Although going beyond the region of Wessex in its definition of the *Angelcynn*, implying that provision was included for *Engliscne* inside Danish-held territory, the definition of territory held by King Alfred and his successors in a text that was seen as religiously protected can hardly have been insignificant (despite the treaty's relatively short lifespan stemming from its breakdown after Guthrum's death and the augmentation of West Saxon-held territory in a subsequent generation).¹⁶ The

Alfred–Guthrum treaty is often used to consider the Danish influence in areas outside West Saxon England, an area conveniently known, thanks to eleventh-century and later legal tradition, as ‘the Danelaw’.¹⁷

It might be noted at this point that while an odd entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records the ‘viking’ activities of raiders and for a period the references to the *Here* are employed each year to indicate the concept of a threatening army,¹⁸ ‘Danes’ – or rather ‘Danish’ – are recorded remarkably frequently, including where one might expect them to be defined more consistently, given the religious framework of the age, as ‘Pagans’ or ‘Heathens’. Similar religious terminology is hardly absent but if the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* can be reasonably considered a work of ethnogenesis,¹⁹ it may be argued that defining *Deniscan* by their ethnicity played an important role in the formation of an English identity or identities in the ninth and tenth centuries. ‘Danes’ in England have thus always had a very legalistic definition, at least from the later ninth century: there were those in England who, even in the eleventh century, were subject to something defined as Danish law, while others were subject to West Saxon, and others to Mercian law. However, in contrast with the institutional reading of a deeply-rooted ‘Danelaw’ shaped by extensive Scandinavian settlement envisaged by Sir Frank Stenton, more recent commentators have rightly drawn attention to the blurring of the geographical and social limits of this legal distinction.²⁰ Insofar as any geographical definition had effect, this legal differentiation went hand in hand with ethnic differentiation in England.

Negotiation of the law to which one might be subject within a particular territory does not seem to have been possible at a personal or even community level, though in the initial stages of the formation of those territories some negotiation may have taken place. The subjection of particular groups in Cambridgeshire and East Anglia to King Edward meant that their identity could thus be defined as ‘English’ (and to which law they might

henceforth be subject is difficult to ascertain, despite the certainty of definition expressed in some texts²¹). But this legal identity only emerged in response to the best part of a century of interaction, during which notions of West Saxon, Mercian, English and ‘Other’ – whether defined as ‘Danes’, ‘Pagans’ or ‘Northmen’ – were shaped and reshaped at numerous points, becoming more apparent at some points and more amorphous at others.²²

While many among recent generations of Anglophone scholars (including the more recidivist of the editors of this volume) have sidestepped the issue of the amorphous identities of the Anglo-Saxons’ ‘Others’ by (ab)using the catch-all but commercially viable term ‘Viking’ to refer to groups who did not define themselves as part of the *Anglecynn*, fewer have used the term ‘Dane’ to refer to more than specific groups at particular times. An exception is Richard Abels’s 1998 reading of the groups of Vikings in ninth-century Wessex, which, in consistent reference to Alfred’s opponents as ‘Danes’, reflects the terminology of the late ninth-century sources.²³ It must be admitted that our frame of reference is both helped and hindered by the fact that ‘Dane’ remains a modern geographical and national identifier, in contrast to terms which are now not in widespread use beyond particular groups (e.g. Frank, Norman) or have shifted meaning from the original sense of the term (e.g. Briton, Scot, Rus[sian]). However, we should not let this be too much of a problem as an early medieval perception of ethnicity could include both its attribution to a geographical area and by the activities undertaken by a group. Many early medieval authors were aware that ‘Danes’ belonged to a specific group which had political legitimacy and contained people who could be identified as rulers (even if the exercise of sole rule was impossible in the ninth century).²⁴ Furthermore, a considerable amount was known about ‘Danes’ in some quarters, especially since Harald Klak was baptised at Mainz (Rheinland-Pfalz), with festivities taking place at the nearby Carolingian palace of Ingelheim in 826 – an occasion which provided a model for the conversion

of Scandinavians in western Europe.²⁵ With an early ninth-century Frankish agenda of rapprochement at play (*'une entière nouveauté'*, according to Magali Coumert), these Danes were evidently a far cry from the tribes of Danes mentioned in passing, with no mention of political organisation, by the late Roman writers Procopius and Jordanes (figures whose work was known in England by at least the eighth century).²⁶

This Danish identity is apparent in Old English sources. When not making specific reference to a 'great army' (*micel heðen here*),²⁷ the Alfredian chronicler(s) and indeed Æthelweard, who used a version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in composing his *Chronicon* in the tenth century, are quite consistent in referring to 'Northmen' as 'Danes'. There are some exceptions but those exceptions are significant. One of the first references to the geographical identity of 'the first ships of Danish men which came to the land of the *Angelcynn*' (*þa ærestan scipu Deniscra monna þe Angelcynnes lond gesohton*), in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for 789, also refers to them – at least in some of the manuscripts – as 'three ships of the Northmen' (*iii. scipu Norðmanna*).²⁸ It is likely that the latter was the initial description, and the additional description of the 'first ships of Danish men' seems to be something of a ninth-century rebranding. The A manuscript, a version of the *Chronicle* close to a late ninth-century Winchester edit, tellingly omits the 'Norðmanna' in its description of the 'iii scipu', resulting in a clearer 'Danish' identity for the ships' crew. Some of the later manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* give specific indication of their provenance as Hörthaland, Norway, though, as Derek Gore notes below, David Dumville makes a case that this identification belonged to a tenth-century Northern version of the *Chronicle*, not an eighth- or ninth-century West Saxon record.²⁹ However, given that the *Chronicle* was initially composed in or near to a court which received Scandinavian visitors, in particular Ohthere (ON Óttarr), a chieftain in territory in the Arctic Circle,³⁰ such geographical specificity may yet be revealing; the information

was relevant in a West Saxon context and need not have been the product of Northern imagination alone. This does not necessarily mean that those first attackers of Portland had really come from that Norwegian province; merely that knowledge of the place *meant* something to a southern English audience, and that geographical knowledge (or at least interest) was sophisticated enough for different versions of geographical origins to have circulated in the ninth century.

A glance at another *Chronicle* tradition is worthwhile. There is some question as to whether the *Annals of St Neots* made independent use of an archetype of the chronicle used to compose the 'Common Stock' of the *Chronicle* around 891×2.³¹ That question casts some light on the 'Danish' terminology employed in the *Annals*. The entry for 789 contains reference to 'iii naves Normannorum' as an equivalent to the vernacular BCDE manuscripts' 'iii. scipu Norðmanna' but the *Annals*' clarification of the identification of these ships as 'id est Danorum' is an interlinear addition; furthermore, there is no Latin equivalent of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s clarifying line '[t]hose were the first ships of Danish men which came to the land of the *Angelcynn*'.³² If the author of the *Annals of St Neots* wrote outside a West Saxon tradition, it may be worth considering whether this author attempted to bring together 'Danes' and 'Northmen', such as in his rendering of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s Old English 'here' as the 'army of Danes or of Northmen' (*exercitus Danorum sive Nordmannorum*) in the entry for 878.³³ There is good reason to consider that the source texts used had required clarification in order to tackle confusing differences which had evidently once meant something but were less important by the time of the compilation of the *Annals*. This is not the place for a discussion of the possible significance of the compilation of the *Annals*, a matter which, as Eric John noted in 2004, deserves further consideration in terms of a possible pre-Conquest context,³⁴ but the discrepancies between the *Annals* and the A manuscript of the *Chronicle* suggest that

there may have been a further development of the editing of the 'Common Stock' of the *Chronicle* in line with a West Saxon policy in the 890s.

It is therefore worth entertaining the notion that in the late ninth-century stages of the composition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the author (or authors) and/or his patron(s) were influenced by notions of the terminology of 'Danes' in Frankish historical traditions. While by the later ninth and tenth centuries, eastern Frankish chroniclers often tended toward reference to 'Northmen',³⁵ one can also follow the emergence of a tradition of reference to 'Danes' in terms of the recording of current events in the first half of the ninth century, perhaps beginning with the *Annales Regni Francorum*'s 813 entry and becoming clearer in Ermoldus Nigellus' accounts of the Danes at the court of Louis the Pious. Coumert cautions that this Frankish attempt to influence Danish kingship through a rapid conversion to Christianity foundered shortly after 826, and at least one Frankish author, Freculf of Lisieux, moved away from writing of Danish background for the Franks, returning to an imagined Gothic ancestry.³⁶ However, the genie was, by then, out of the bottle: in West Francia, in the mid-ninth century entries of the *Annals of St Bertin*, the Northmen had, by and large, become Danes.³⁷ In such records, even if they did not always do as was expected of them, 'Danes' could still be portrayed as the embodiment of a geographically-defined group, recognized by self-consciously Romanising rulers on both sides of the English Channel. 'Danes' were figures who could be treated with, dealt with, and ultimately brought to the will of the king, upon whose authority their political existence could be said to have depended. This was, as Pierre Bauduin has shown, a successful model used on a limited scale in Francia at the end of the ninth century and built upon the cultural memory of the baptism of Harald Klak in 826.³⁸

As far as Alfred's kingship was concerned, such client kingship could also operate successfully, with treaties made with Danish leaders in the same period.³⁹ In the ninth-century entries of

the *Chronicle* and, to an extent, in some entries alluding to that genre of historical record, such as in the poem on Edmund's 'liberation' of the Five Boroughs,⁴⁰ the message is strong enough: 'Danes' had a role to play in Alfred's kingdom and in its development, which was not simply that of a subjected people. By the early tenth century, with newer additions to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the terminology shifted. Groups of people who might be termed 'Anglo-Scandinavians' by historians and archaeologists (applying a label that was never in contemporary usage) were referred to by the geographical areas inhabited by them in Britain, as Northumbrians and East Angles and suchlike,⁴¹ before once again being referred to as Danes within a moral framework of ethnic hostility, conquest and submission in the narrative of the 'Æthelredian Chronicle'.

The distinction between 'Northmen' and 'Danes' evidently became one which could be used according to circumstance. In the 'Five Boroughs' poem recorded in the *Chronicle*, a tenth-century English (albeit probably not West Saxon) author made specific reference to the Danes, formerly 'compelled to bow' (*nyde gebegde*) to Northmen (*Norðmannum*, translated by Whitelock as 'Norse'), who were 'liberated' (*alysde*) by King Edmund when he captured the 'Five Boroughs' of Leicester, Lincoln, Derby, Stamford and Nottingham in 942.⁴² Although the notion of referring to the control of an aggrandising southern-based English ruler as their 'liberation' is perhaps one of the better-spun myths of tenth-century England,⁴³ some distinction between 'Danes' and 'Northmen'/'Norse' as a concept relevant at least to contemporaries in the 940s is notable.⁴⁴ Following an absence of Danes and consistent reference to 'Northmen' in the *Chronicle*'s poem on the Battle of *Brunanburh* (937), which, Donald Scragg has noted, shares significant similarities with the 'Five Boroughs' poem,⁴⁵ the distinction between 'Northmen' and 'Danes' may have been intended to allow the integration of the latter group into a wider, rather heterogeneous group.

The term *Angelcynn* may have been relevant to this wider group for much of the tenth century, and it is perhaps indicative of this that in Wessex, in the later 920s or early 930s, a charter for the New Minster, Winchester, retained the distinction, recording Æthelstan as ‘the most glorious king of the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes’ (*Angelsaxonum Denorumque gloriosissimus rex*), emphasizing the Danes’ role in a *regnum anglorum*.⁴⁶ It is perhaps no coincidence that around this time the first known marriage was made between an English royal and Scandinavian ruler: the marriage of one of Æthelstan’s sisters to King Sihtric of York, a recent convert to Christianity under Æthelstan; as Richard Abels notes, this may indicate the relative equality perceived between the two groups.⁴⁷ Apparent distinctions between ‘Viking’ groups parallel the manner in which early medieval Insular traditions have often drawn attention to this distinction between communities around the Irish Sea, though here again there is no consensus on the origins of the different groups, or even consistency in the use of terminology amongst the works of medieval authors.⁴⁸

So much for Danes and Northmen. What of other terms? Arguably, though Asser’s *Vita Alfredi* mitigates against the ‘Danish’ reading of the evidence in ninth-century Wessex through consistent use of *Pagani* (confusingly rendered in the standard translation, by Keynes and Lapidge, as ‘Vikings’),⁴⁹ Jinty Nelson has made a persuasive case for the non-pejorative fashion in which Asser employed the term. Asser recorded the *pagani* present at Alfred’s court and in the monastery founded by Alfred in western Wessex, at Athelney (Som.), in a fashion which clearly suggests that at least the latter group were not pagan *pagani*.⁵⁰ Asser’s Welshness, or at least his Britishness, may be a factor here, in trying to portray Alfred through the lens of British rulership, potentially for a Welsh audience.⁵¹ Asser’s notion of ethnogenesis is apparent in his confusion of Geat, Goth, and Jute, an issue which Craig Davis considers to have been part of a deliberate attempt to cultivate a Gothic ancestry

for the Alfredian dynasty.⁵² Such an ancestry has implications for the apparent Scandinavian connections of the West Saxons. The emergence of a narrative of fifth- and sixth-century West Saxon ethnogenesis in the ninth-century *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, bringing ‘traditional Danish heroes’ into the West Saxon pedigree,⁵³ did not subsume ‘Jutish’ elements in that account. This may have helped to develop that Scandinavian background apparent in the *Chronicle*. The ‘Saxon’ figures of Cynric and Cerdic, legendary founders of the West Saxon dynasty, may have taken priority over the ‘Jutish’ leaders Stuf and Wihtgar in the *Chronicle*’s account of early West Saxon origins,⁵⁴ but they do not eclipse them entirely. As Barbara Yorke observed:

The *Chronicle* presents the creation of the kingdom of Wessex as the result of the combined efforts of Saxon and Jutish leaders; Alfred himself resulted from a Saxon and Jutish liaison and so could claim to be the embodiment of his people.⁵⁵

The *Chronicle* does not, of course, refer to the settlement of ‘Danes’ *per se* in its early entries, and there is some debate as to what was understood by the reference to ‘Jutes’. It is interesting that by the ninth century the location of ‘Jutish’ origin was clearly perceived as being in Scandinavia, even if, as we have seen with Asser, there was some ambiguity as to precisely where in Scandinavia that was. Such ambiguity may have suited late ninth-century political and cultural purposes in Wessex. The accounts of the ninth century may represent a change in attitude – a Scandinavianisation, effectively – of Jutish origins, reflecting some real changes and, arguably, readapting a sense of ethnogenesis to suit the circumstances of the time.⁵⁶ That a shift in perception took place in the ninth century may be seen with the aid of Magali Coumert’s reconsideration of Bede’s reading of ‘Angles’ and ‘Jutes’. Bede’s geographical ethnogenesis may have provided a *tabula rasa* for ninth-century writers. Reading the term *Iutae*’s novelty in Bede’s account, Coumert characterises the ‘Jutish’ origins of some of the English people as

a tradition invented by Bede, allowing a Germanic group to fit a Biblically-influenced narrative of name transformations. Chapter 15 of the first book of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* famously describes the Angles' province of *Angulus* as being between those of the *Iutae* and Saxons, which, if read as Angeln, traditionally places the *Iutae* in Jutland. However, Coumert observes that Bede's use of *Angulus* directly imitated Pope Gregory the Great's use of the term to refer to a remote area at the edges of the world, and thus had no geographical specificity at all. Consequently, the *Iutae* had nothing to do with Jutland, Scandinavia, or even a real location.⁵⁷ Coumert's reading of the evidence, seen in the broader setting of the narratives of invented origins of early medieval peoples in general, is certainly logical and the development of a Scandinavian perspective on 'Jutish' origins makes more sense if seen in a ninth-century context.

There is further evidence for the nurturing of cultural links between Wessex and Scandinavia. In 2006, Craig R. Davis built on a case proposed by Alexander Murray for a link to the traditions recorded in the *Beowulf* poem. Where Murray had emphasised the possible reception of Scandinavian poems detailing Scandinavian ethnogenesis in a West Saxon court, Davis makes a case for its close links to an Alfredian court:

Through this process of poetic ethnogenesis, even warriors of alien or enemy extraction could be adopted into the militarized kindred formed around the successful war-leader and his family.⁵⁸

The parallels with the inclusivity of an Alfredian court of the possible manipulation of ethnic identity to suit political purposes are obvious. The Geats and Danes of the world of *Beowulf* could have real political meaning in the world of the West Saxon court. The earliest manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS A, does not contain an Alfredian version of Bede's account of the origins of 'Angles', 'Saxons' and 'Jutes' (the passage is a later addition) but Æthelweard's version of the *Chronicle* renders Bede's *Iutae* as *Giota* and the

Old English version of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* refers to *Gēatas*, suggesting some consistency of a semantic shift in the minds of the later Anglo-Saxons.⁵⁹ (The author of the Old English Bede was, admittedly, Mercian but Æthelweard's reference to the *oppidum capitale* of *Anglia uetus* as a 'town known in the Saxon language as *Slesuic* but by the Danes as *Haithaby*' suggests that Æthelweard was not afraid to link the English with Danish influence and geography.)⁶⁰ While casting Beowulf's *Geats* as residents of what is now Jutland may be too far-fetched, an association may have been in existence in the minds of at least some West Saxons in the ninth century.⁶¹ This may be indicated by the fact that the province of Jutland was known in Old and Middle English as *Gotland*. Ohthere's account to King Alfred, presented in the *Old English Orosius*, made such an association in spite of – or perhaps because of – the use of the same place-name to refer to the Swedish province, recorded from the testimony of Wulfstan, the other Scandinavian sailor at King Alfred's court.⁶²

Material, Monument and Identity

The various manifestations of Danish and other Scandinavian identities in ninth- and tenth-century Wessex discussed so far show how names and origins could be moulded to suit circumstances. All the same, despite its amorphous nature, one can at least say that contemporaries used written terminology to identify groups associated with Scandinavia, showing intent to define identity in some way. The material evidence for the Danes in the region is less apparent. Such evidence, where found, does not often present a clear indication of a distinctly 'Danish' ethnicity or even singular existence. Even in the Danelaw itself the archaeological evidence for the Danes remains relatively elusive.⁶³ As Guy Halsall reminds us, any attempts to identify an innate or primordial factor behind such perceived ethnicity may, in reality, be 'quite a pointless task'.⁶⁴ Therefore, the mutable identity of Danes indicated in the documentary records may reflect

the relative success by which the Danes were able to integrate themselves into a predominately English society. Consequently, 'Danishness' in the tenth and eleventh centuries may have manifested itself in a variety of contexts, and not particularly consistently.⁶⁵ This mutability is further supported by linguistic studies that emphasise the bilingual nature of society in regions of England in which both Old English and Old Norse were spoken. Within a wider Anglo-Scandinavian cultural milieu, any overall distinctions may have operated at a social and not an individual level.⁶⁶ Ultimately, one might therefore expect an archaeology of Danes in Wessex to be hard to establish.

There is some evidence for trade between communities in the Danelaw and the south. At Shaftesbury, Dorset, the discovery of a hoard dating from the reign of Æthelred II, in an iron-bound chest containing around a hundred coins, mostly minted in Danelaw towns, points toward such trade connections.⁶⁷ If such connections were more than sporadic, the artefactual evidence for the presence of Danes in Wessex that they would have entailed is relatively thin on the ground and notable examples, such as the unusual copper-alloy Ringerike-style knife handle from outside Winchester, are exceptional.⁶⁸ However, recent research on early medieval metalwork has begun to shed some light on the Danish cultural impact on Wessex and the extent of its diffusion. Excavations at the site of the Old Minster, Winchester, produced some Anglo-Saxon metalwork with Scandinavian influence, including a strap-end which may have been designed by an Anglo-Saxon craftsman who 'copied directly' from a Scandinavian brooch. Noting the tenth-century Winchester style influence in the work, David Wilson termed it 'an example of English Jellinge style ornament'.⁶⁹

If clear evidence of ethnic diversity or cultural affiliations was generally rare, even in areas of intense Viking activity, one would naturally expect the evidence to be virtually non-existent in Wessex, which was, after all, a kingdom that the Vikings were unable to conquer. At first glance

the archaeological evidence appears to support the apparently 'negative' picture. For example, evidence for Viking presence around Reading, where the Viking army based itself in 871,⁷⁰ is fragmentary, with notable exceptions being a coin hoard from St Mary's churchyard, and the burial of a man accompanied by a horse and a Scandinavian style sword, found in the nineteenth century.⁷¹ Such a poor representation is commensurate with the other documented Viking bases in the region at this time, which, Ben Raffield has noted, are often subject to archaeological misinterpretation.⁷²

However, as Dawn Hadley has noted, it might actually be in times of direct conflict that 'discernible difference' could be revealed. In such contexts, enemies, real or otherwise, might be differentiated from a perceived norm, and 'seized upon and framed in ethnic terms'.⁷³ Episodes of conflict are well recorded and, as Thomas Williams shows elsewhere in this volume, much was centred on the Wessex region.⁷⁴ Despite this, archaeological evidence for conflict in the form of war graves and military paraphernalia is actually relatively rare. This may be due to the sporadic and fluid nature of conflict and the relatively few numbers involved at any one time. It is equally possible that the nature of such conflict may have promoted a heightened sense of ethnic identity within the combatants, particularly among those who may have determined 'Otherness' through a sense of ethnic or cultural difference. Consequently, such violence might have become more personalised and enflamed with notions of not only defeating an enemy, but punishing, even *publicly* executing them. The mass burial site at Ridgeway Hill, Dorset, perhaps the only direct evidence for violent conflict in the region, provides a case in point. As Angela Boyle's contribution to this volume notes, the excavations revealed the remains of upwards of fifty decapitated individuals dated to the late tenth or early eleventh century. These burials may date to the reign of Æthelred and thus might coincide with the renewal of Viking attacks in Wessex prior to Cnut's accession in 1016. Moreover, these

burials are a rare discovery in that the evidence points to a multiple execution that was conducted as a single event, perhaps one that included an element of display or even public spectacle (Boyle notes that, at the least, one of the first to be executed was evidently witnessed by his peers).⁷⁵ Insofar as one might expect an execution site to represent an accretion of burials from a number of separate occasions, ‘normal’ Anglo-Saxon criminal justice was evidently not being practised but was subverted, if only in terms of its scale. Such intriguing archaeological evidence may naturally remind us of Æthelred’s infamous directive of 1002 which ordered all ‘Danish men [*Deniscan men*] who were among the English race [*Angelcynne*]’ to be killed on Brice’s day.⁷⁶ Though Boyle has doubts – a position shared by us – about whether the execution took place as a direct result of that order, the Ridgeway site may ultimately indicate a period of alienation and a time where the distinction and ethnic distance between ‘Danish’ and ‘English’ may have been more pronounced. The excavators’ movement away from associating the Ridgeway burials with the St Brice’s Day Massacre seems sensible, however, given that the notion of a direct link with a *specific* event is problematic but the archaeological nature of ethnic differentiation may be made all the more significant by another recent discovery, made in 2008, of skeletons in an early medieval context in Oxford, in the grounds of St John’s College. Oxford was a city a little beyond the West Saxon heartlands, for which a contemporary charter records the burning by what appears to have been a mob, of St Frideswide’s church, in which certain ‘Danes’ (*Dani*) had taken shelter in order to ‘escape death’.⁷⁷ Although there is some debate as to whether those killed in Oxford were members of the local community or were *actually* outsiders (the current reading seems to be mercenaries, though they may just as easily have been a long-distance trading community) may indicate that the St Brice’s Day events had tangible effects beside the obvious destruction of the church, which can be linked with the materiality of the past.⁷⁸

The Oxford charter of 1004 and its reference to the involvement of *suburbani* in the actions taken against the Danes, whether members of a settled community or locally-stationed mercenaries, suggests that the events of 1002 were less well organised than the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*’s account implies.⁷⁹ In contrast with the Oxford evidence, there is good reason for disentangling the Ridgeway burials from the events of 13 November 1002. Admittedly, the events of 1002 may have a south-western element, in that the involvement of a Danish mercenary formerly in Æthelred’s service, Pallig, in actions around Exeter in 1001 may have been linked to the king’s response in 1002.⁸⁰ However, the likely sporadicity of mob violence associated with the St Brice’s Day Massacre suggests something less organised than the symbolic and public, albeit brutal, execution of a group of warriors at a site chosen for its evident importance in the landscape which the Ridgeway burials seem to represent.⁸¹

Perhaps reflecting these archaeologically-attested expressions of ‘Othering’, in the later tenth and early eleventh centuries it is not the descendants of Danish settlers who are referred to as ‘Danes’ in the sources but more commonly it is the recent arrivals.⁸² More specifically, a distinction can perhaps be made between ‘Anglo’-Danes and ‘Scandinavian’ Danes.⁸³ The latter, for example, may have partly comprised recruits from Scandinavian countries serving in Cnut’s army, among others. In this sense such foreign ‘mercenaries’ may have been viewed as just that – foreigners who threatened violence and instability, thereby promoting some reactive tension. There may have been wider implications for English Anglo-Scandinavian communities, whose perceived ethnic background and affiliation might have become more distinctive.

It is likely that remnants of Cnut’s army remained in England once the throne had been secured. Here perhaps a sense of ‘Danishness’ might have been reinforced in court circles and the presence of a royal bodyguard in the form of Danish housecarls would have been apparent. Overall, the Danish triumph

would have introduced a significant number of Danes to the political and social elite.⁸⁴ Direct links with the homelands would have naturally remained and some material evidence for this can be found. A number of Scandinavian runic inscriptions commemorate men who served in England and 'some had obviously fought with Knut there'.⁸⁵ At Galteland, Southern Norway, reconstructions of a memorial stone found in Eyje parish revealed a memorial inscription in memory of a warrior named Bjórr. Given the stone's reference to Bjórr's death 'in the retinue [*i liði*] when Knútr attacked England' and the significance of Wessex to Cnut's campaigns, it is not unreasonable to suggest a direct link with Wessex.⁸⁶ A more certain link with Wessex can be seen on the Swedish Nöbblesholm rune-stone's reference to the stone laid in memory of a certain Gunnar, who was laid 'in a stone coffin in Bath in England' by his brother, Helgi.⁸⁷ Lavelle has noted elsewhere that the stone's rendering of Bath (Som.) as *Bathum* ('Baths'), commensurate with the Old English plural form of the place-name, 'suggests a degree of continuing contact and influence'. Whether or not the burial was the culmination of the peaceful death of a settler like Orc of Abbotsbury or had stemmed from the events associated with a Viking army at Bath in 1013 is open to question,⁸⁸ but the brother's act of burial may provide a glimpse of the importance of maintaining horizontal connections, which could have distinguished a Scandinavian elite from the rest of the population, in a manner discussed below.

It is perhaps through the enduring medium of stone sculpture, a medium that Anglo-Scandinavians had become intimately familiar with over two centuries, that a context may be sought in which to further question Anglo-Danish interaction.⁸⁹ These stones, often crafted or inscribed as memorials, have been a particularly rich source of information about Viking Age England and, as we might expect, are particularly prevalent in the Danelaw. Unsurprisingly, they are relatively rare in the Wessex region. However, more widely, influences on the South-West's artistic tradition might be found

beyond the heartland of Wessex, in Cornwall, where these influences manifested themselves in stone monuments. Here, both Irish metalwork and manuscripts may have formed a particular source of inspiration.⁹⁰ In contrast, this is not the case with Scandinavian artistic tradition, which appears to have provided comparatively little stylistic influence on art forms in Wessex. Moreover, Rosemary Cramp argues that the resurgent use of traditional Anglo-Saxon animal ornament in the South-West might have been used in a 'competitive manner' and as a reaction to Scandinavian contact from the ninth century.⁹¹ The sense of competition was evidently mutual: as Dawn Hadley observes, in the regions of the Danelaw the consequent advance of West Saxon rule may have also made the adoption of Scandinavian iconography 'inappropriate or potentially dangerous'.⁹²

Where found, Scandinavian influence on Wessex stone sculpture appears to be largely due to cultural diffusion rather than direct influence or patronage. These stylistic influences may indicate a 'creeping influence' of Anglo-Danish artistic survival becoming part of the mason's general artistic repertoire by the early eleventh century.⁹³ Consequently, evidence for Scandinavian artistic influence on Wessex stone sculpture may be subtle and a component of regional and wider English styles. However, architectural details which may bear some comparison with Scandinavian-influenced work may be seen in the churches of St Mary the Virgin, Hardington Mandeville (Som.) and St Andrew's, Yetminster (Dors.). The latter comprises a set of figural sculptures on a capital that have some similarities to Northumbrian Viking Age sculptures.⁹⁴ At St Sampson's, Cricklade (Wilts.), part of a coped grave cover, now in the north wall of the porch, has terminals and a strange branching pattern on its gable 'reminiscent of Anglo-Scandinavian art in the north west'.⁹⁵ At Copplestone, Devon, the depiction of horsemen on the cross shaft may also have some Scandinavian influence.⁹⁶ However, doubts about the provenance of influence make it difficult to draw firm conclusions. What was once

thought to have been a 'quasi-Jellinge' decoration of ribbon-like bodies surrounded by interlace on fragments of stone at Colerne (Wilts.) is now generally thought to be pre-Viking (or at least pre-Viking settlement) in date and influence.⁹⁷ Such a case illustrates the problems in attributing solely Scandinavian influence to styles that ultimately draw, as art naturally does, from a range of styles. As Cottrill noted in 1935, while attributing the influence on the Colerne fragments to eighth-century Insular art and effectively removing Colerne from the corpus of Anglo-Scandinavian art, 'the Jellinge style itself was derived from Irish art'.⁹⁸ Much work has, of course, been undertaken since on the influences on Viking Age art in Scandinavia but Cottrill showed that the simple attribution of artistic influences can rarely be made in a single direction. A similar case of ambiguity – perhaps stemming from the Anglo-Scandinavian interests of the original investigator, W. G. Collingwood – can be seen in a cross-shaft found in a garden in Prior's Barton, Winchester, for which Collingwood noted 'Danish' and 'Anglian' influences, attributing it to the eleventh century, 'when the Danish element was strong throughout England'.⁹⁹ It should be said that Collingwood himself was circumspect about the ambiguities of influence but it is testament to the ways in which interpretations can change with the finding of new material that the Prior's Barton cross-shaft is now linked – as far as possible – with the 'Anglo-Saxon' cultural milieu of ninth-century Winchester and its environs.¹⁰⁰ In this light, although Winchester, with its political credentials for the West Saxon dynasty and its foundations for West Saxon Christianity established since the seventh century, seems as far from 'Anglo-Danish England' that it was then possible to be, a closer scrutiny of archaeological evidence from the city from the ninth century onward is revealing.

Winchester and the Danes

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that Vikings attacked Winchester in 860. While there is, perhaps

unsurprisingly, little archaeological evidence for this important event,¹⁰¹ an intriguing group of finds from just outside the city, at Stanmore, might suggest a residual Viking presence in the area. A parcel of four Anglo-Saxon pennies, recovered by a metal detectorist on two separate occasions, may be related to a mortuary deposit, and it is suggested that it is an example of the Scandinavian custom of placing coins with the dead.¹⁰² The dates of the coins suggest a deposition sometime in the 860s and may indicate some continuing Scandinavian influence in or around the city. However, it is only for a later period that clearer evidence for a Scandinavian, primarily 'Danish', presence can be found.

Commenting on the Danelaw, Hadley has observed that 'visible expressions' of 'Danishness' were perhaps determined not so much by the scale of settlement 'as by the political and cultural manipulation of "Danishness" by the elites'.¹⁰³ It may therefore be significant that it is only when we come to the eleventh century, a period of Danish kingship, that we begin to see the emergence of a distinctive Anglo-Danish identity, yet one that may only represent a small, but influential pocket based around the royal administrative centre of Winchester. Kingship was largely itinerant in the early medieval period, and notions of 'capital' cities and power centres are perhaps anachronistic. Cnut, for example, is recorded as being involved in legal and political activities in London and Canterbury, and certainly London by this period was emerging as a powerful economic centre.¹⁰⁴ Nonetheless, Winchester's likely primacy is not to be underestimated. Matthew Townend has argued that England was central to Cnut's vision of an Anglo-Danish empire and that Winchester, ceremonial seat of Anglo-Saxon kings, was the primary focus of his court.¹⁰⁵

Major excavations conducted in the City between 1961 and 1971 investigated 11,612 m² of the urban settlement within the medieval walls. Yet the vast majority of the finds from the period were diagnostically Anglo-Saxon.¹⁰⁶ Consequently, it was

clear to one of the excavators that Winchester's material culture was that of an 'Anglo-Saxon city', in contrast to York and Dublin.¹⁰⁷ In this sense, Winchester might conform to the overall picture of the elusiveness or mutability of the material evidence for the Danes in Wessex. However, Yorke notes that the relatively small number of finds that betray some Scandinavian influence, such as bone combs, spoons and stone sculptural fragments, may point to a 'small number of immigrants at the higher end of society'.¹⁰⁸ Other such rare examples, such as the fragments of a sword and horse equipment excavated from a robber trench at Old Minster, contrast with other personal artefacts from Winchester, both in ornamentation and in their use of precious metals.¹⁰⁹ The influence of a Danish elite in Winchester may not have been limited to fine metalwork. The so-called 'North-Sea' group of single-sided composite bone combs found in the city may be attributed directly to Danish influence, unlike in Normandy, for example, where the style and form of comparative examples remain firmly in the Frankish tradition.¹¹⁰

Clearly Winchester was of some political importance since both the royal palace and the treasury was there, and both the important churches of Old and New Minsters offered a ceremonial context for royal power and dynastic memorial. The strategic and perhaps symbolic importance of Winchester in the plans of the Danish kings may be revealed by the stationing of housecarls in the city by Harthacnut (1040–2), perhaps associated with defence of his claim to the throne.¹¹¹ Similarly indicative of the city's importance is Snorri Sturlusson's record in his *Heimskringla*, that all three Danish kings, Cnut, Harold I 'Harefoot' (1035/7–40), and Harthacnut, were buried in Winchester.¹¹² Although such a late tradition as that of Snorri is not without its problems as direct historical reportage (not least as there are contemporary traditions for the ill-treatment of Harold's corpse by his half-brother¹¹³), the very fact that in an early thirteenth-century Scandinavian context, Snorri wrote of Winchester's place in Anglo-Scandinavian

politics is, in itself, revealing of the impact of the early eleventh-century city.

If Winchester's churches are considered as Christian institutions bowing to Scandinavian conqueror(s), there was precedent in the tenth-century Danelaw, where, as Hadley observes, ecclesiastics saw the value of alliance with 'whoever was ruling locally'. The importance of the church as a mechanism for secular authority cannot be understated. In a period of political instability, the church offered both a stable, universal context, and a 'model for kingship and the exercise of power' and a 'legitimization of power'.¹¹⁴ To such ends in eleventh-century Wessex, Cnut was a generous patron. The greater churches at Winchester would have also provided an important context for the legitimization of the new Danish royal dynasty, particularly through ceremony and memorial practices and associated architectural contexts. Cnut in particular was a great benefactor to the Minsters and the bishopric was second only in wealth and prestige to Canterbury at this time.¹¹⁵ The important excavations at Winchester's Old Minster conducted during the 1960s are therefore unique in offering an insight into the interaction between Danish secular and ecclesiastical power. In this volume, Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle explore the possibility that the east-end of the tenth-century Old Minster may have been planned as a dynastic mausoleum for Danish royalty. An intriguing collection of mortuary sculpture from the Winchester excavations points to the emergence of a distinctive Anglo-Danish elite centred on the nascent royal court.

The excavations revealed that by 1000, Winchester's Old Minster was a vast and richly decorated church. It was over 76 m in length and decorated with wall paintings, moulded stonework, architectural sculpture and coloured and probably painted window glass.¹¹⁶ One hundred and six architectural fragments were recovered from the Cathedral Green site with nearly 90 per cent from demolition deposits or later layers from the Old and New Minsters.¹¹⁷ One of the most important

stones was a fragment of architectural frieze that forms the context for Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle's discussion presented below. The fragment featured a carved pictorial sculpture that may have once formed a component of a larger narrative frieze featuring the mythical story of Sigmund. It is possible that the frieze once decorated the east end of the church and provided an architectural statement and may also have been used to demonstrate Cnut's claim to the English throne, although Yorke has reservations regarding its original Old Minster provenance.¹¹⁸ The frieze itself probably represents an element of a now lost but much more substantial piece. Consequently, the meaning of this fragment, its date and its subject matter have been the subject of some debate.¹¹⁹ David Wilson, for example, argues that the fragment was perhaps unfinished since no traces of paint could be found on it.¹²⁰ However, as Biddle notes, there is very little evidence otherwise for the use of paint in sculptural contexts at the Old Minster.¹²¹

Biddle puts forward the idea that the scene is drawn from the Scandinavian *Volsunga Saga*. Here he discusses an intriguing link between Danish royalty and Winchester and the possibility that the narrative frieze deliberately recorded the shared ancestry of the English and Danish royal houses. The story of Sigmund may have been a significant element in the tradition common to the royal houses of Denmark and Wessex¹²² and the marriage of Emma and Cnut, possibly in the Old Minster in 1017, may have provided a specific ceremonial and public context, a connection discussed in this volume by Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle.¹²³ Certainly Norse literary tradition was highly prized by Cnut's court¹²⁴ and the function of the frieze may have been as an effective canvas for political propaganda as well as ratifying the fledgling Danish dynasty.

Inevitably, in terms of both function and architectural setting, similarities between the frieze and the Bayeux Tapestry, likely to have been created some sixty years or so later, have been highlighted.¹²⁵ Both appear to use a similar method

of scene division and there are similarities in figure shape, hairstyle and dress that may suggest a similar cultural milieu. This has raised some possibilities that both the frieze and the Tapestry certainly 'emerged from a wider and older tradition of narrative art displayed in a variety of media'.¹²⁶ In this sense, their propagandist function may have also been of a similar nature, an interpretation that may also be supported by the evidence for Winchester being an emerging centre for the creation and patronage of Norse Skaldic poetry at this time.¹²⁷

The archaeological context of the fragment provided a *terminus ante-quem* of 1093–4 and dates it to after c.980, when the east end of the Old Minster was started.¹²⁸ The provenance of the frieze is therefore commensurate with the period of Danish rule. It is also possible Danish royal burials lay at the east end of the church, where excavations in the 1960s revealed an apsidal chapel and series of graves.¹²⁹ The excavations also revealed a number of graves at the east of the Old Minster. One such grave was identified as a 'Hogback' monument (Figure 2.1).¹³⁰ These distinctive monuments, often found in the context of cemeteries, have been claimed to have served as Viking 'colonial monuments'.¹³¹ All but three, of over a hundred examples, are found in the Danelaw (the other two being in Cornwall). On closer examination it might be argued that the Winchester example is less sophisticated and plainer than the majority of its counterparts, many of which are heavily stylized. Its shape, however, does bear some comparison and may have represented a relatively later Anglo-Danish variation on an original Anglo-Scandinavian theme. Comparisons have been made with Danish examples from Løvenholm and Djursland, Jutland.¹³² The grave itself contained a man in his early twenties buried in a wooden coffin head resting on a pillow of flint and limestone and accompanied by a single Roman coin.¹³³ Such a grave good, with undoubtedly symbolic connotations, can be found in other burial contexts of comparative date, excavated elsewhere in the city, at Staple Gardens, where six graves dating



Figure 2.1. Grave Slab (CG WS 104.2) and marker (CG WS 104.1) over the grave of Gunni, as found during the Old Minster excavations, looking north-east. (Photograph by J. W. Hopkins III, © Winchester Excavations Committee)

from around the tenth century contained Roman coins that appeared to have been deliberately placed within the graves.¹³⁴ (However, despite the presence of a number of charcoal burials, a more general lack of known grave markers may mean that parallels cannot be drawn too far.)¹³⁵ The Old Minster grave was accompanied by a freestanding grave marker, which, like the monument, was of Bembridge Limestone and featured a relief of a right hand holding a cross.¹³⁶ Here, the subject material and the positional relationship between the held cross and the grave is intriguing as it appears to make direct pictorial reference to the deceased's Christianity. A statement of obvious intent and meaning may further suggest a recent conversion, and one that may have been both religiously and politically expedient.

The monument itself was inscribed in Old English, reading 'HER LIÐ G[VN]N[I] : EORLES FEOLAGA' – 'here lies Gunni, Eorl's [or *the* earl's] fellow'.¹³⁷ Commenting on the Norse and Latin

influences on the inscription, Matthew Townend notes the Anglicization of the Latin *hic iacet* in the otherwise unique inscription *her lið*, linking it with 'a Latinate, ecclesiastical air through the influence of its three royal minsters',¹³⁸ but fellow, *feolaga*, is an Anglicization of the Old Norse *fēlagi* that appears in a small number of Norse rune stones with meanings such as 'partner', 'comrade' or 'comrade-in-arms'.¹³⁹ The use of loan words is not in itself particularly uncommon – Townend notes the use of Norse loan words in documents from Cnut's court.¹⁴⁰ Equally, the use of Old English inscription on Scandinavian sculpture is not unusual. In the Danelaw, the inscriptional stones at Aldbrough and Kirkdale churches in Yorkshire, for example, are written mainly in later Old English whilst using loan words from Old Norse.¹⁴¹ However, the word *feolaga* warrants comment, as it is comparatively rare in an Old English context, occurring in the mid-eleventh century will of a certain Thurstan, son of Wine, and in the account of the agreement

made between Edmund Ironside and Cnut at Olney-by-Deerhurst (Gloucs.) in 1016.¹⁴² Both of these occasions indicate relationships which, like the Old Norse *félagi*, were outside the kindred,¹⁴³ but it may be added that they had some religious significance. The will, recording an East Anglian agreement and showing a community with a fair smattering of Scandinavian names, indicates a post-obit agreement that allowed for provision for the remaining member of the 'fellowship' (*felageschipe*) between Thurstan and his 'fellow', Ulfketel.¹⁴⁴ For Edmund Ironside and Cnut, recorded in a version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* with links to Worcester and York, the fellowship was intended to mean something quite specific to the *Chronicle's* audience (despite the scepticism of later historians about how long it was to last before Edmund's death).¹⁴⁵ This was fellowship, in its borrowing from an Old Norse notion of parity, then; arguably this may have been a paradigm that, if it was not in opposition to the notion of Anglo-Saxon lordship, served to emphasise horizontal social links in a manner that did not undermine the notion of royal service, just as friendship, *freond-scipe*, did not undermine the authority and duty of lordship, *hlaford-scipe*. It may show that the Eorl named on the memorial inscription was not *an* earl but rather that Eorl was used as a personal name.¹⁴⁶

Such indications of horizontal allegiance seem to have manifested themselves in a commemorative context (although not *necessarily* the commemoration of death). The Aldbrough inscription, associated with a sundial, though not using a term relating to 'fellowship', commemorates a link that did not have to be a family link (the inscription records that 'Ulf had this church built for his own sake and for Gunnvor's soul').¹⁴⁷ In rural areas such expressions of solidarity were perhaps displayed at churches over which one or other party had some proprietary influence as well as, of course, enacted through prayer. In towns, while we have seen that Gunni's grave cover was an expression of such solidarity in an urban ecclesiastical context, such relationships might also be linked to guilds,

which were becoming more prevalent during the tenth and eleventh centuries, as new settlements and communities were established particularly – though not only – in Danelaw towns.¹⁴⁸ In one of her contributions to this volume, Ann Williams highlights the wide-ranging significance of guilds as religious and social institutions.¹⁴⁹ Abbotsbury, Dorset, a 'place in the country' addressed by Williams, was home to one of the pre-Conquest guilds. Although Abbotsbury was hardly urban and indeed may illustrate the commonness of guild relationships outside towns proposed by Williams (though Abbotsbury's *burh* place-name element may not have been inconsequential), the guild's link with the eleventh-century Danish settlement there is nonetheless apparent.

In the early twelfth century, making reference to pre-Conquest records, the scribe of the *Winton Domesday* recorded the *chenictehall* (*i.e.* the 'hall of the *cnichtas*'), a place 'where the *cnichtas* used to drink their guild' (*ubi chenictes potabant gildam suam*) at the time of Edward the Confessor (1042–66).¹⁵⁰ Even if Gunni and his 'fellow', Eorl, had not drunk at that particular hall or indeed, if the church associated with the property in the survey had not been there before 1066, we should note that the concept of Danish *hus-karl* and Old English *cnicht* were once more not particularly far removed by that time. They were at least representatives of a social class associated with the city in the eleventh century, where such socially-differentiated behaviour was expected.¹⁵¹

We have ventured far from five words on a grave inscription but if the discussion is necessarily speculative it is at least only careful speculation based on a reasonable balance of probability. To return to the grave marker itself, it is also possible that, like the strap-end noted above, this may be evidence of an English craftsman working to a Danish design. Such examples may point to both a cultural mutability that may have perhaps been viewed as entirely normal. The Scandinavian origin of the name and wording of the inscription may suggest the burial was of one of the Anglo-Danish

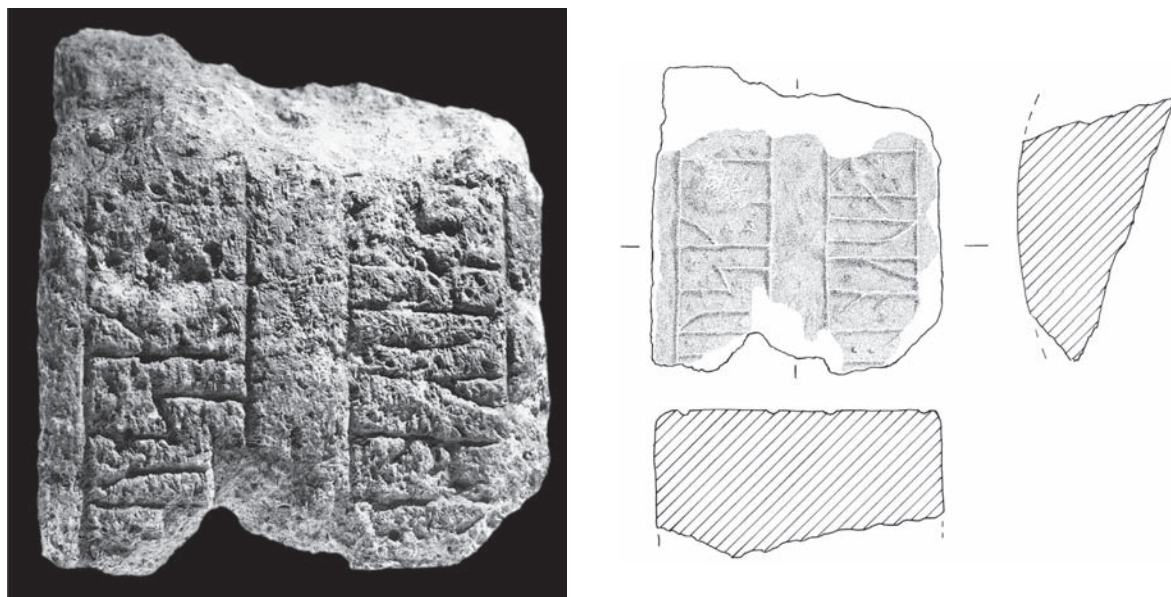


Figure 2.2. Photograph and drawing of fragment with runic inscription of the word 'Huskarl', re-used in the tower of St Maurice's, Winchester (H: c.92 mm, W: c.177 mm, L: c.185 mm, Diam. of curve: c.430 mm). (Courtesy of Winchester Excavations Committee and Winchester City Council)

elite, possibly even one of Cnut's own men.¹⁵² The location of the grave at the east end of the Old Minster would by itself suggest a person of some importance and influence. The style of the grave, its inscription and location suggest that the individual was someone of influence attached to the royal court and perhaps the body of the king more specifically. This raises the possibility that the burial is of a housecarl, a member of the king's personal bodyguard. Certainly, as we have seen, the documented presence of housecarls has already been noted in Winchester.

To support this interpretation we can examine another mortuary stone from Winchester, this time found in 1970 in the core of the east wall of the tower of St Maurice's church, which lay just to the north of the New Minster and would have been on the edge of the royal and ecclesiastical complex.¹⁵³ This limestone fragment (Figure 2.2), which, like the above example, may have been originally recycled from a Roman context, was one

part of a recumbent mortuary stone and must have originally come from either the New Minster or, more likely, the Old Minster cemetery. The piece has the remains of a sequence of Scandinavian runes that may have once run up the opposite edges of the slab.¹⁵⁴ The formal arrangement of the lines and therefore the text has suggested that it was memorial stone.¹⁵⁵ The fragment also had clear traces of red paint remaining that indicated that the stone was not long exposed to the elements. It has been suggested that the inscription was in Old Norse and dated to c.1016×42.¹⁵⁶ The inscription itself may refer to one or possibly two personal names. More significantly, another possible interpretation drawn from the inscription is the word *huskarl*.¹⁵⁷ This may further support the presence of the king's retinue in Winchester. What is also interesting is that the only clear survivals of Scandinavian mortuary architecture in the region may be directly related to the royal court. Although the presence of housecarls is recorded elsewhere in

Wessex,¹⁵⁸ housecarls based in Winchester may have been specifically attached to the royal court. This may account for why Winchester, perhaps more so than anywhere else in Wessex, had a clearer and more deliberate Danish identity, albeit one that was localised and perhaps confined to the royal court and the physical precinct of palace and minster. Here, 'Danishness' was perhaps invoked and promoted as a badge of honour linked to military prowess, tradition and lineage. However, the emphasis of the the St Maurice stone contrasts with the Old Minster Gunni stone. The latter is Old English and very much integrated within a Latin tradition, whereas the St Maurice fragment's use of a runic inscription is, in some sense, more confrontational. Such instances may inevitably reveal the influence of agency behind such memorials and that conceptions of Danishness were negotiated on an individual, rather than societal, level.

As both Kjølbye-Biddle and Townend have previously noted, what these signs of Scandinavian culture in Winchester have in common is a 'high or aristocratic status'.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, the monumental character of the memorial sculptures and their wider architectural context evidence implies broader dynastic pretensions and a possible desire for political stability and longevity. Although eleventh-century Winchester's comparison with Lincoln as a pocket of demonstrable Danish power and influence in an otherwise 'Anglo-Saxon' cultural landscape is no longer tenable due to the amount of metalwork found in Lincoln's hinterland in recent years, it is nonetheless worth commenting on the expression of elite identity there. In Lincoln, tenth- and eleventh-century stone Scandinavian-style decorated grave covers can be found at St Mark's church, Wigford, in the lower city. These are believed to have been copied, produced or transported from York, and suggest the presence of a Scandinavian elite in Lincoln who may have had affiliations with York.¹⁶⁰

Despite the intriguing evidence from Winchester, it is clear that this evidence is the exception and

not the norm. Moreover, as we have seen, such evidence was largely limited to the royal and religious quadrant of the city, and not the city as a whole. The political, religious, historical and symbolic importance of Winchester to the Danes, and the city's intimate contact with the royal court and retinue, meant that it was here that evidence for a Danish identity is likely to have been particularly apparent – at least for the course of a generation prior to the reign of Edward the Confessor. In Winchester, for a time, conceptions of Danishness were not only physically present through Danes serving in the royal circles (perhaps including four benefactors of the New Minster, each labelled as *Danus* in the *Liber Vitae*)¹⁶¹ but also, to an extent, promoted and manipulated in specific forms of artistic and architectural expression. This does not appear to be the case more generally in Wessex, where the situation is more complex and where notions of identity were perhaps shaped by heterogeneity, just as elsewhere in early medieval England. But Danish assertions of identity at particular times and places could still be a powerful dynamic. Such assertions might have been particularly acute in Winchester, in the political and cultural heart of the English kingdom, where evidence might suggest that the city was afforded a special place in the aspirations of the Danish kings, particularly Cnut. Here, royal tradition, myth and civic symbolism may have been highly attractive to the Danish kings in a period of political instability. The royal court and particularly the religious institutions at Winchester offered an important context for a more acute sense, and overt display, of Danish identity that was ultimately linked to royal and dynastic aspirations.

Winchester's preferential treatment over London is logical, despite the fact that London was already larger and wealthier than Winchester by the end of the tenth century, and was already beginning to take on the role of 'economic capital'.¹⁶² London may have had strong anti-Danish sentiments following a siege in the last years of Æthelred's reign and Londoners had chosen Edmund Ironside over



Figure 2.3. Queen Emma and King Cnut presenting a gold cross, in the early eleventh-century *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, Winchester (BL MS Stowe 944, fol. 6r). (© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved)

Cnut in 1016.¹⁶³ As David Hill notes, the ‘efforts to embellish Winchester as “capital” may have been associated with a ‘punishment’ of London.¹⁶⁴ Winchester may have been particularly well placed to consolidate the south. The city was the ancient residence of his Anglo-Saxon predecessors and it may have lent Cnut’s kingship a certain level

of security and credibility. Furthermore, Cnut’s enemies were not necessarily confined to British or even Scandinavian shores. Winchester may have provided a suitable place – arguably more suitable than London – to reinforce his power in the south and to safeguard the southern shore against an external threat from Normandy which had begun a political shift away from Danish allegiances since a treaty was made with King Æthelred in 991. Norman opposition to an Anglo-Danish kingdom began to manifest itself in 1013, when Duke Richard II of Normandy (996–1026) provided support and shelter for the exiled West Saxon royal family following the conquest of the English kingdom by Swein Forkbeard.¹⁶⁵ Although Norman military intervention is better known following the death of Cnut in 1035, in support of the visit by the æthelings Edward and Alfred (resulting in the death of Alfred), there is a case to be made for an abortive Norman invasion in or around 1033. The fact that during Cnut’s reign the exiled Edward referred to himself in distinctly royal terms while in Normandy, endowing the *coastal* monastery of Mont St-Michel with English lands (perhaps while present at a council at Fécamp associated with a Norman invasion fleet),¹⁶⁶ may have been justification enough for a policy under Cnut which was focused on the south coast of England.¹⁶⁷

All the same, although conveniently situated, Winchester was not on the south coast itself, and purely strategic considerations cannot have been the sole determining factor in Cnut’s policies in Wessex, not least as Anglo-Norman relations were not always characterised by hostility during Cnut’s reign.¹⁶⁸ Perhaps more significantly, Winchester offered a potent symbol as well as a ceremonial tradition to the king. In many ways the city represented the physical embodiment of kingship expressed in particular through its architecture, the royal palace and the Old and New Minsters. A sense of place resonated with the history of the later Anglo-Saxon kings, including Alfred, upon whom Cnut may have modelled himself. Winchester also offered a context for Cnut’s dynastic pretensions

and the Old Minster offered a fitting context for a royal mausoleum. Cnut was a keen patron of the Winchester Minsters and he may have wished to forge a more personal link to them through well-directed gifts and bequests. This is demonstrated by the celebrated depiction in the New Minster's *Liber Vitae*, of Cnut and Emma presenting a cross to the church (or rather, to Christ Himself).¹⁶⁹ In this, a hovering angel is shown placing the crown on the king's head while pointing upwards to Christ – perhaps ratifying Cnut's divine right to rule.¹⁷⁰ The king was also responsible for the Old Minster receiving a shrine for the relics of St Birinus, apostle of Wessex.¹⁷¹ It is possible that the motive behind this was to be seen to both adopt and promote an important Wessex saint, who was believed to have played a role in the historical foundation of the Old Minster in the mid-seventh century.¹⁷² As M. K. Lawson has noted, Cnut was also keen to appoint a royal priest to the see of Winchester, a certain Ælfwine, in 1032. Although the appointment of royal priests to bishoprics also extended to Canterbury, Wells, and probably, London,¹⁷³ it is not unlikely that in Winchester, Ælfwine's background as a royal supporter played a role in an expectation that he would bolster and ratify royal ceremonial as well as oversee a potential dynastic mausoleum.

Conclusions

It is not the object of this chapter to attempt to make Wessex, even Winchester, appear more 'Danish'; such interpretations of 'Danish' England have been shown to be problematic even for the 'Danelaw' regions. However, Danish identity might have been more visible at particular times and could be a powerful dynamic. Although Winchester hardly became a political and cultural backwater in the years after the death of King Harthacnut, as Edward the Confessor used the Old Minster as the site of his coronation in 1043 and maintained links with the New Minster during his reign,¹⁷⁴ it is interesting that Westminster and London

gradually gained (or in London's case, re-gained) political gravity in the years after 1042. This was not, of course, a zero-sum game: just as the political community of London and the Danish newcomer needed each other after Cnut's takeover in 1016, Winchester remained important as a West Saxon political centre for some years after 1042. However, it is worth considering, even if briefly, whether the interests of Godwine family in the city after 1042 may have been a result of the continuing impetus of an Anglo-Danish political culture in England or indeed a cause of it.¹⁷⁵ Given Edward's relationship with the Anglo-Danish dynasty, and the Godwine family in particular, this could hardly have been an ideal state of affairs.

Thus, conceptions of 'Danishness' may have manifested at particular points in time and/or place where a cultural distinctiveness was useful in the negotiation of power structures and within the mechanisms of dynastic aspiration. Furthermore, it has been argued above that both Winchester, with its Anglo-Saxon royal connections and symbolic potency, and the cultural traditions and aspirations of the new royal court were equally important to the Danish kings and perhaps crucial in forming a socio-political mould for national or even international pretension. Overall, however, the recognition of continuing Danish influence and accommodation help to show that notions of identity in what was the political and cultural heart of the English kingdom were shaped by heterogeneity, just as elsewhere in early medieval England. Ultimately, the integration of Danish identities in Wessex in the ninth century and in the emerging *Angelcynn* in the tenth century meant that it was perhaps a natural development for them to be employed and perhaps repackaged in the eleventh century.

Notes

1. We gratefully acknowledge Barbara Yorke for reading an earlier version of this paper, as well as David Bates, Alban Gautier and Elton O. S. Medeiros for discussion on particular points of detail.

2. Bede, *HE* I.15 and, for the *Gewissae*, III.7.
3. Bede, *HE* I.15 for the 'natio iutarum', which by Bede's day probably included the 'province of the Meonwara' (*Meanuarorum prouinciam*), recorded in Bede, *HE* IV.13. See B. Yorke, 'The Jutes of Hampshire and Wight and the Origins of Wessex', in *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. S. Bassett (London, 1989), pp. 84–96, and her 'The Meonware: "The People of Meon"' in *The Evolution of the Hampshire Landscape: the Meon Valley*, ed. M. Hughes, Hampshire County Council Archaeology Report 1 (Winchester, 1994), pp. 13–14.
4. On the early extension of influence in southern England, see B. Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 57–84. For an assessment of the ninth-century hegemony recorded in *ASC* 829 and its limits, see H. Edwards, 'Ecgbert (d. 839)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8581>> (accessed 9 June 2013).
5. See, e.g., A. Reynolds and A. Langlands, 'Social Identities on the Macro Scale: A Maximum View of Wansdyke', in *People and Space in the Middle Ages, 300–1300*, ed. W. Davies, G. Halsall and A. Reynolds (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 13–44. The notion of a Danish *adventus* is indicated in a number of twelfth-century texts, such as WM, *GRA*, 120.1, pp. 180–1, an issue discussed in R. Lavelle, 'Sous la lumière d'Alfred le Grand ou dans l'obscurité des Vikings? Quelques problèmes et possibilités dans la périodisation de l'histoire anglaise 'pre-Conquest'', in *Les périodisations de l'histoire des mondes britanniques: Relectures critiques*, ed. J.-F. Dunyach and A. Mairey (Rennes, 2015), pp. 33–53.
6. For 'English' identities, see P. Wormald, 'Engla Lond: The Making of an Allegiance', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 7 (1994), pp. 1–24, and S. Foot, 'The Making of *Angelcynn*: English Identity before the Norman Conquest', *TRHS* 6th Ser. 6 (1996), pp. 25–49; for the limits of 'national' identities, cf. M. Innes, 'Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism and Political Allegiance', in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 65–88.
7. On the holdings of East Anglian and Mercian ealdormen, which contain discussions of the West Saxon landholdings, the classic studies remain C. Hart, 'Athelstan "Half King" and his family', *ASE* 2 (1973), pp. 115–14, and A. Williams, 'Princeps Merciorum Gentis: The Family, Career and Connections of Ælfhere, Ealdorman of Mercia, 956–83', *ASE* 10 (1982), pp. 143–71; for the holdings of the Godwine family, see R. Fleming, *Kings and Lords in Conquest England* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 53–103.
8. The mention of 'West Saxons' in the Ordinance of the *Dunsæte* should be noted here, as a lawcode relating to the borders of Wales which may date from West Saxon interests beyond Wessex in the early tenth century (for which see by M. Fordham, 'Peacekeeping and Order on the Anglo-Welsh Frontier in the Early Tenth Century', *Midland History* 32 (2007), pp. 1–18) or, in an argument proposed by Alex Woolf, "Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic": The Ordinance Concerning the Dunsæte', delivered at the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 16 July 2009, the interests of the earldom of Wessex in south Wales in the eleventh century. *Dunsæte* is published in *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. F. Liebermann (Halle, 3 vols, 1903–16), Vol. 1, pp. 374–79; trans., with facsimile, in F. Noble, *Offa's Dyke Reviewed*, ed. M. Gelling, BAR British Ser. 114 (Oxford, 1983), pp. 104–109.
9. WM, *De ant. Glas.*, ch. 67, pp. 138–39. The fact that he is remembered for sending four copes to the community suggests that his link was not forgotten, though not all of the bishops he is listed with are from the reign of Edgar (Scott, *Early History*, pp. 206–7, n. 35), and, as the spellings of the names differ considerably, it is unlikely that the 'sepulcra Seifridi [*inter al.*] episcoporum' linked to a number of grants of land and money (ch. 31, pp. 84–85) is a reference to the same bishop.
10. Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *Vita S. Oswaldi*, i.4, in *Byrhtferth of Ramsey, the Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgbwine*, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge (Oxford, 2009), pp. 16–17. For discussion of Oda's career, see C. Cubitt and M. Costambeys, 'Oda (d. 958)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20541>> (accessed 27 Aug. 2013).
11. For East Anglian 'Danish' and 'English' identities, see S. J. Harris, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (New York, 2003), pp. 114–15, and M. A. L. Locherbie-Cameron, 'The Men Named in the Poem', in *The Battle of Maldon AD 991*, ed. D. Scragg (Oxford, 1991), pp. 238–49.
12. Asser, ch. 94, p. 81, trans. S. D. Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 103, and discussed by Stevenson in his edition, pp. 334–35 (though cf. Keynes and Lapidge, p. 272, n. 233, for the comment that

Stevenson's suggestion is 'unprovable'). We are grateful to Barbara Yorke for drawing our attention to this tentative possibility.

13. On this issue see A. Woolf, 'Community, Identity and Kingship in Early England', in *Social Identity in Early Britain*, ed. W. O. Frazer and A. Tyrell (London, 2000), pp. 91–109.
14. A. Boyle, 'Death on the Dorset Ridgeway: the Discovery and Excavation of an Early Medieval Mass Burial', below, pp. 109–21. The burials are discussed in this chapter, pp. 14–15, and by Lavelle in 'Law, Death and Peacemaking in the "Second Viking Age": an Ealdorman, his King, and Some "Danes" in Wessex', below, pp. 131–34.
15. O.S. SY 672 859, about 2 km (1.2 miles) to the east of the boundary between the royal hundred of Cullifordtree and the hundred of 'Uggescombe', in the map accompanying *The Dorset Domesday*, ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin (London, 1991). For the legal significance of such burials (though for understandable reasons, neither author comments on the Ridgeway burials), see A. J. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs* (Oxford, 2009), and N. Marafioti, 'Punishing Bodies and Saving Souls: Capital and Corporal Punishment in Anglo-Saxon England', *Haskins Society Journal* 20 (2009 for 2008), pp. 39–57.
16. Although Sir Frank Stenton's notion of Alfred's claims to authority over all Englishmen, in *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1943; 3rd edn, 1971), pp. 261–62, has been roundly dismissed by David Dumville ('The Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum', in his *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 1–27, at p. 23), even Dumville's 'practical' attribution of the treaty conditions to border areas is an indication of interests of defining people beyond strict territorial limits. For the 'forward'-looking nature of the treaty, see discussion in P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century, Volume I: Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 285–86.
17. The vernacular document titled 'The Shires and Hundreds of England' (1045×1109), printed in *An Old English Miscellany Containing a Bestiary, Kentish Sermons, Proverbs of Alfred, Religious Poems of the Thirteenth Century*, ed. R. Morris, EETS Original Ser. 49 (London, 1872), pp. 145–46, is a clear definition of the areas attributed to different laws, though given that 'Engle lond' is defined therein as an area delimited by St David's and Caithness, one might consider the definition as one that owed as much to aspiration as to reality. Further doubts are expressed by K. Holman, 'Defining the Danelaw', in *Vikings and the Danelaw: Select Papers from the Thirteenth Viking Congress, Nottingham and York, 21–30 August 1997*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell, R. Hall, J. Jesch and D. N. Parsons (Oxford, 2001), pp. 1–11, at p. 5. For an exposition of the shaping of the 'Danelaw' by legal boundaries in the ninth century, see P. Kershaw, 'The Alfred–Guthrum Treaty: Scripting Accommodation and Interaction in Viking-Age England', in *Cultures in Contact*, ed. Hadley and Richards, pp. 43–64. For the flexibility and inclusivity inherent to the shaping of identities in the tenth century and beyond, see D. M. Hadley, 'Ethnicity and Acculturation', in *A Social History of England, 900–1200*, ed. J. Crick and E. van Houts (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 235–46.
18. ASC 867–887. See R. Abels, 'Alfred the Great, the *Micel Hæden Here* and the Viking Threat', in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. T. Reuter (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 265–79.
19. For this issue, see B. Yorke, 'Fact or Fiction? The Written Evidence for the Fifth and Sixth Centuries AD', *ASSAH* 6 (1993), pp. 45–50. It should be noted that the term 'ethnogenesis' is used here more loosely, to refer to the creation of the identity of a *gens* rather than the rigid model of development read by Charles R. Bowlus, in 'Ethnogenesis: the Tyranny of a Construct', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. A. Gillett (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 241–56.
20. F. M. Stenton, *The Danes in England*, Raleigh Lecture on British History (London, 1927), repr. in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England: Being the Collected Papers of Frank Merry Stenton*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 136–65; *Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 509–13. Holman, 'Defining the Danelaw', pp. 5–8; see also D. M. Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw: Its Social Structure, c.800–1100* (London, 2000), especially pp. 300–6.
21. See n. 17, above.
22. R. Lavelle, 'Representing Authority in an Early Medieval Chronicle: Submission, Rebellion and the Limits of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, c.899–1065', in *Authority and Gender in Medieval and Renaissance Chronicles*, ed. J. Dresvina and N. Sparks (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2012), pp. 62–101. Sources relating to the integration of territory in East Anglia and the Danelaw are *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Camden 3rd Ser. 92 (London, 1962), I.42, pp. 56–57, and II.25, pp. 98–99, trans. J. Fairweather,

- Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth, Compiled by a Monk of Ely in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 76 and 121, and ASC ABCD 914, A 917, as well as Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 397 (AD 926) and no. 548 (AD 949).
23. R. P. Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998), *passim*.
 24. K. L. Maund, "A Turmoil of Warring Princes": Political Leadership in Ninth-Century Denmark', *Haskins Society Journal* 6 (1994), pp. 29–47. Note the Astronomer's insinuation of hindsight in his description of Harald as 'to whom the highest authority of the kingdom of the Danes appeared to belong' (*ad quem summa regni Danorum pertinere videbatur*); Astronomus, *Vita Hludowici imperatoris*, ed. E. Tremp, MGH Scriptores rerum germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 64 (Hannover, 1995), ch. 24, p. 356; trans. T. F. X. Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious: Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and the Astronomer* (University Park, PA, 2009), p. 249. See also S. McLeod, 'Know Thine Enemy: Scandinavian Identity in the Viking Age', in *Vikings and their Enemies: Proceedings of a Symposium held in Melbourne, 24 November 2007*, ed. K.-L. Burge (Melbourne, 2008), pp. 3–16.
 25. Recorded in: (i) *Annales Regni Francorum*, s.a. 826, ed. F. Kurze, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 6 (Hannover, 1895), pp. 169–70; (ii) Ermoldus Nigellus, *In honorem Hludovici imperatoris*, lines 2062–513, in Ermold le Noir, *Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épîtres au roi Pépin*, ed. E. Faral (Paris, 1964), pp. 156–90 (trans. Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious*, pp. 174–83); (iii) Thegan, *Gesta Hludovici imperatoris*, ed. Tremp, ch. 33, p. 220 (trans. Noble, p. 208). For the resonance of this event, which Charles the Bald may have witnessed at a young age, and which provided a model for Charles's conversions of Vikings later in the ninth century, see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc et les Vikings* (Paris, 2009), pp. 123–49 and, with specific regard to the young Charles's experiences, J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), p. 77–79. For baptism and parallel ceremonies, see Lavelle, 'Law, Death and Peacemaking', below, pp. 128–31.
 26. *History of the Wars*, ed. and trans. H. Dewing (London, 1924), IV, pp. 414–15 and *Iordanis Romana et Getica*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auctores antiquissimi 5.1 (Berlin, 1882), pp. 53–138, at ch. 3, sec. 23, p. 59, cited by C. R. Davis, 'An Ethnic Dating of Beowulf', *ASE* 35 (2006), pp. 111–29, at 117–18. Davis also cites (p. 121) J. Ogilvy, *Books Known to the English, 597–1066* (Cambridge, MA, 1967), p. 185, for the knowledge of Jordanes by Alcuin, an issue which provides a plausible connection with late ninth-century Wessex. See M. Coumert, *Origines des peuples: les récits du Haut Moyen Âge occidental (550–850)* (Paris, 2007), pp. 364–65, for the suggestion that the *Ravenna Cosmography* (*Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia*, ed. J. Snetz, *Itineraria Romana* 2 [Stuttgart, 1940], I, 11; dated 788×809, according to Coumert) reprised Jordanes' description and influenced Ermoldus' reading of the Danes. (We gratefully acknowledge Alban Gautier for drawing our attention to Coumert's work.)
 27. See Abels, 'Alfred the Great, the *Micel Hæden* Here and the Viking Threat'.
 28. ASC BCDE s.a. 789.
 29. D. Gore, 'A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses', below, p. 56, citing D. N. Dumville, 'Vikings in Insular Chronicling', in *The Viking World*, ed. S. Brink with N. Price (London, 2008), pp. 350–67, at p. 356.
 30. See J. Bately and A. Englert (eds), *Ohthere's Voyages: a Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages Along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and its Cultural Context* (Roskilde, 2007), especially J. Bately, 'Ohthere and Wulfstan in the Old English *Orosius*', pp. 18–39, and, for the process of enquiry and response at Alfred's court, A. Englert, 'Ohthere's Voyages seen from a Nautical Angle', pp. 117–129, at pp. 117–18.
 31. The question of the relationship (with no conclusive answer) is addressed by, e.g., D. N. Dumville and M. Lapidge (eds), *The Annals of St Neots with Vita prima sancti neoti*, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition 17 (Cambridge, 1985), pp. xxxii–xxxix and J. Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Texts and Textual Relationships* (Reading, 1991), pp. 31–41 and 61.
 32. ASC s.a. 789; noted in Whitelock's edition at p. 35, n. 4.
 33. Dumville and Lapidge (eds), *Annals of St Neots*, p. 75.
 34. E. John, 'The Annals of St Neots and the Defeat of the Vikings', in *Lordship and Learning: Studies in Memory of Trevor Aston*, ed. R. Evans (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 51–62.
 35. E.g. by Regino of Prüm, whose record of the siege of Duisburg (884) referred to 'Northmen' (*Nortmanni*)

- who had ‘come ‘from Denmark’ (*ex Denimarca venerant*): *Reginonis abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH *Scriptores rerum germanicarum in usum scholarum* 50 (Hanover, 1890), p. 122; trans. S. Maclean, *History and Politics in Late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe: The Chronicle of Regino of Prüm and Adalbert of Magdeburg* (Manchester, 2009), p. 191.
36. Coumert, *Origines des peuples*, pp. 366–67, citing Freulf, *Historiae*, I.2, 26, in *Frechulfi Lexouiensis episcopi Opera omnia: Textus*, ed. M. I. Allen, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis* 169A (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 147–48.
 37. E.g. AB s.a. 841 (‘pyratae Danorum’; ‘Danorum pyrat’).
 38. Bauduin, *Le monde franc et les Vikings*, especially pp. 47–149 (for notes on the conversion of Harald, see above, n. 24). For the ideology of peace with Danes, see also P. Kershaw, *Peaceful Kings. Peace, Power and the Early Medieval Political Imagination* (Oxford, 2010), and, for a consideration of the practicalities of the micropolitics of ninth-century Seine settlement, see J. Le Maho, ‘La Seine et les Normands avant 911’, in *Naissance de la Normandie 911, le traité de Saint-Clair-sur-Epte*, ed. M. Pierre (Paris, 2013), pp. 19–33.
 39. See R. Abels, ‘Paying the Danegeld: Anglo-Saxon Peacemaking with Vikings’, in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, ed. P. De Souza and J. France (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 173–92.
 40. Scragg, ‘A Reading of Brunanburh’.
 41. L. Ten Harkel, ‘The Vikings and the Natives: Ethnic Identity in England and Normandy c. 1000 AD’, in *The Medieval Chronicle IV*, ed. E. Kooper (Amsterdam, 2006), pp. 175–88.
 42. ASC ABCD 942. For logical reservations as to the exact composition of the ‘five boroughs’, whose names in the poem are alliterative, see G. Williams, ‘Towns and Identities in Viking England’, in *Everyday Life in Viking-Age Towns: Social Approaches to Towns in England and Ireland, c.800–1100*, ed. D. M. Hadley and L. Ten Harkel (Oxford, 2013), pp. 26–28.
 43. Credit for this observation is owed to Ben Snook, in ‘Give War a Chance: Just War and Conflict Resolution in 9th- and 10th-Century England’, delivered at the *International Medieval Congress*, University of Leeds, 9 July 2012.
 44. Though cf. C. Downham, ‘“Hiberno-Norwegians” and “Anglo-Danes”: Anachronistic Ethnicities in Viking Age England’, *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 19 (2009), pp. 139–69, at pp. 146–8.
 45. D. Scragg, ‘A Reading of Brunanburh’, in *Unlocking the Wordhoard: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving Jr*, ed. M. C. Amodio and K. O’Brien O’Keeffe (Toronto, 2003), pp. 109–22. Explicitly suggesting a common authorship of the two poems, Scragg does not refer to S. Walker, ‘A Context For “Brunanburh”?’’, in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. T. Reuter (London, 1992), pp. 21–39, who suggests a date of 940×2 for the *Brunanburh* poem as a response to the crises of the earlier parts of Edmund’s reign, though the two authors’ readings do not seem to be too far apart.
 46. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1417 (AD 924×33). See S. Foot, *Æthelstan: the First King of England* (New Haven, 2011), pp. 116–17.
 47. Abels, ‘Paying the Danegeld’, p. 189. This is cited and discussed in Kershaw, *Peaceful Kings*, p. 21. We are grateful to Elton O. S. Medeiros for discussion of Æthelstan’s kingship in this context.
 48. C. Downham, ‘Viking Identities in Ireland: It’s Not All Black and White’, *Medieval Dublin* 11 (2011), pp. 185–201; see also her ‘“Hiberno-Norwegians” and “Anglo-Danes”’, and D. N. Dumville, ‘Old Dubliners and New Dubliners in Ireland and Britain: a Viking-Age Story’, in *Medieval Dublin IV: Proceedings of the Medieval Dublin Symposium 2004*, ed. S. Duffy (Dublin, 2005), pp. 78–93.
 49. See notes to the translation of Asser by Keynes and Lapidge, in *Alfred the Great*, pp. 230–31.
 50. J. L. Nelson, ‘England and the Continent in the Ninth Century: II, the Vikings and Others’, *TRHS* 6th Ser. 13 (2003), p. 6.
 51. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 41–42 and p. 56. Downham, ‘Viking Identities in Ireland’, pp. 196–99, notes the Irish influence on Welsh annalistic sources in reference to ‘foreigners’.
 52. Davis, ‘An Ethnic Dating of Beowulf’, pp. 123–24.
 53. Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 143, citing A. C. Murray, ‘Beowulf, the Danish Invasions and Royal Genealogy’, in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. C. Chase (Toronto, 1981), pp. 101–12.
 54. Yorke, ‘Jutes of Hampshire and Wight’, p. 95.
 55. Yorke, ‘Fact or Fiction?’, p. 48.
 56. For the later record of Cnut as *Jóta dróttinn* (‘lord of the Jutes’), in Óttarr Svarti, *Knútsdrápa*, 3, line 5 (*Den Norsk-Islandske Skjaldedigtning*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen, 4 vols, 1912–15), Vol. B-1, p. 273), presumably used for poetic purposes, see M. Townend, ‘Contextualizing the *Knútsdrápur*: Skaldic Praise-Poetry at the Court of Cnut’, *ASE* 30 (2001), pp. 145–79, at p. 173.

57. Coumert, *Origines des peuples*, pp. 418–26. Other ‘origins’ for the Jutes are available: Philip Bartholomew, ‘Continental Connections: Angles, Saxons and Others in Bede and Procopius’, *ASSAH* 13 (2005), pp. 19–30, linked the *Iutae* with the north-eastern provinces of Francia, such as the area around Soissons, for which late Antique terminology is more fitting to Bede’s description, and for which the material culture is comparable to that found in southern Hampshire, Kent, and the Isle of Wight.
58. Davis, ‘An Ethnic Dating of Beowulf’, p. 115.
59. *ASC* AE 449; Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 8; *The Old English Version of Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. T. Miller, EETS, Original Ser. 95 and 96 (Oxford, 2 parts, 1890–1), part 1, I.12, pp. 52–53. For the latter reference, see S.M. Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede’s Historia Ecclesiastica* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 95–96.
60. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 9. See W. Jezierski, ‘Æthelweardus redivivus’, *EME* 13 (2005), pp. 159–78, at p. 164. However, it should also be noted that Æthelweard’s possible confusion between Suebi and Swedes in the same passage may undermine too much weight placed upon his geographical sensibilities.
61. See K. Malone, ‘King Alfred’s Geats’, *Modern Language Review* 20 (1925), pp. 1–11; ‘King Alfred’s “Götland”’, *Modern Language Review* 23 (1928), pp. 336–39.
62. See Janet Bately’s editorial notes in *The Old English Orosius*, EETS Supplementary Ser. 6 (London, 1980), p. 195. Wulfstan’s passage is in Bately’s edition of the *Orosius* at p. 16; the place-name is also discussed by Bartholomew, ‘Continental Connections’, pp. 22–23.
63. S. Keynes, ‘The Vikings in England’, in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, ed. P. Sawyer (Oxford, 1997), pp. 48–82, at p. 67.
64. G. Halsall, *Worlds of Arthur: Facts and Fictions of the Dark Ages* (Oxford, 2013), p. 108; for Halsall’s perspective on the Viking period, see his ‘The Viking Presence in England? The Burial Evidence Reconsidered’, in *Cultures in Contact*, ed. Hadley and Richards, pp. 259–76.
65. D. M. Hadley, ‘In Search of the Vikings: the Problems and Possibilities of Interdisciplinary Approaches’, in *Vikings and the Danelaw*, ed. Graham-Campbell, Jesch and Parsons, pp. 13–30, at p. 24.
66. M. Townend, *Language and History in Viking Age England: Linguistic Relations between Speakers of Old Norse and Old English* (Turnhout, 2002).
67. R. H. M. Dolley, ‘The Shaftesbury Hoard of Pence of Æthelræd II’, *Numismatic Chronicle* 6th Ser. 16 (1956), pp. 267–80. This is also discussed in D. M. Metcalf, *Atlas of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Coin Finds c.973–1086*, Royal Numismatic Society Special Publications 32 (London, 1998), p. 90.
68. Winchester City Museums AY5, catalogued at <<http://www.winchestermuseumcollections.org.uk/index.asp?page=item&mwsquery={collection}={archaeology}&AND{Identity%20number}={WINC-M:AY%205}>> (accessed 4 Jan. 2014).
69. D. M. Wilson, ‘Appendix: Late Saxon Metalwork from the Old Minster, 1964’, in M. Biddle, ‘Excavations at Winchester 1964: Third Interim Report’, *Antiquaries Journal* 45 (1965), pp. 230–64, at pp. 262–63 (quotation at p. 262).
70. *ASC* 871.
71. D. A. Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval Britain* (Oxford, 2005), p. 117, citing K. East, ‘A Lead Model and a Rediscovered Sword, both with Gripping Beast Decoration’, *Medieval Archaeology* 30 (1986), pp. 1–7 and, on the coin hoard (albeit with some reservations), N. Brooks with J. Graham-Campbell, ‘Reflections on the Viking-Age silver hoard from Croydon, Surrey’, in N. Brooks, *Communities and Warfare 700–1400* (London, 2000) pp. 69–92, at p. 89; see also G. Astill, ‘The Towns of Berkshire’, in *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, ed. J. Haslam (Chichester, 1984), pp. 53–86, at p. 73 and discussion in J. Kershaw, ‘Scandinavian-style Metalwork from Southern England: New Light on the “First Viking Age” in Wessex’, below, p. 87, n.3.
72. B. Raffield, ‘Antiquarians, Archaeologists, and Viking Fortifications’, *Journal of the North Atlantic* 20 (2013), pp. 1–29. We are grateful to the author for sharing material from this paper with us prior to its publication.
73. D. M. Hadley, ‘Viking and Native: Rethinking Identity in the Danelaw’, *EME* 11 (2002), pp. 45–70, at p. 52.
74. T. J. T. Williams, ‘The Place of Slaughter: Exploring the West Saxon Battlescape’, below, pp. 35–55.
75. Boyle, ‘Death on the Dorset Ridgeway’, p. 117.
76. *ASC* CDE 1002. The translation here is from M. Swanton (ed. and trans.) *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (London, 1996), p. 135, in preference to Whitelock’s rendering (p. 86) of *Angelcynne* as ‘in England’.
77. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 909 (AD 1004), trans. *EHD* 1, pp. 590–93.
78. A. M. Pollard, P. Ditchfield, E. Piva, S. Wallis, C.

- Falys and S. Ford, “‘Sprouting Like Cockle Amongst the Wheat’: the St. Brice’s Day Massacre and the Isotopic Analysis of Human Bones from St. John’s College, Oxford”, *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 31 (2012), pp. 83–102.
79. A review of the written evidence, and the development of the cultural memory of the massacre is provided by R. Lavelle, ‘Ethnic Cleansing in Anglo-Saxon England’, *BBC History Magazine* 3:11 (November 2002), pp. 42–44.
 80. ASC A 1001; CDE 1001. R. Abels, ‘Household Men, Mercenaries and Vikings in Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Mercenaries and Paid Men: The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of a Conference held at University of Wales, Swansea, 7th–9th July 2005*, ed. J. France (Leiden, 2008), pp. 143–66, at p. 156
 81. See Lavelle, ‘Law, Death and Peacemaking’, below, p. 133.
 82. Hadley, ‘In Search of the Vikings’, p. 23.
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 140. Townend, *Language and History in Viking Age England*, p. 193.
 141. Townend, *Language and History in Viking Age England*, p. 191. It may also be noted that Kirkdale was a proprietary church of someone who was evidently in a personal retinue; the sort of person who might be considered a housecarl. See A. Williams, 'Thegnly Piety and Ecclesiastical Patronage in the Late Old English Kingdom', *ANS* 24 (2001), pp. 1–24, at pp. 10–11.
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143. Jesch, *Ships and Men*, p. 235. Cf. Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Danish Royal Burials in Winchester', pp. 224–26, for later emphasis on shared kinship between Cnut and Edmund.
144. L. Tollerton, *Wills and Willmaking in Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2011), p. 52, n. 247, notes that this was for overseeing the distribution of alms.
145. See S. Pons-Sanz, 'Norse-Derived Vocabulary in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. A. Jorgensen (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 275–304, at pp. 279–80, on this local variation of *freondscype*, 'friendship', presented in ASC CE 1016.
146. Cf. the alternative reading presented by Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Danish Royal Burials in Winchester', p. 217.
147. For discussion of the Nöbblesholm rune-stone's reference to Bath (Som.), in a similarly commemorative – albeit familial – context, see above, p. 16.
148. See Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, p. 243. A *cniht* guild is also recorded in London, in Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1103 (AD 1042×4).
149. Williams, 'A Place in the Country', below, pp. 163–64; 'Thegnly Piety and Ecclesiastical Patronage', pp. 22–23.
150. *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, ed. M. Biddle, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford, 1976), no. 10 (pp. 34–35). A place which the editors considered another *chenictahalla*, on this occasion with no mention of drinking, is recorded at no. 34 (p. 39). See also the discussion in Williams, 'A Place in the Country', below, p. 164.
151. It is worth noting here the *Vita Æthelwoldi*'s record, c.1000, of Northumbrian nobles in the retinue of King Eadred (946–55), whose continuing intake in the face of a miraculously endless supply of drink was attributed, with disapproval, to their northern (Anglo-Scandinavian?) identity: Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1991), ch. 12, pp. 22–25.
152. Kjølbye-Biddle and Page, 'Scandinavian Rune-Stone from Winchester', pp. 391–92.
153. Winchester City Museum, accession no. 334.
154. Tweddle, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, pp. 327–28.
155. M. P. Barnes and R. Page, *The Scandinavian Runic Inscriptions of Britain* (Uppsala, 2006).
156. Tweddle, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, pp. 327–28.
157. Tweddle, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, p. 328.
158. For this issue, see discussion in Williams, 'Place in the Country', p. 159, and Lewis, 'Danish Landowners in Wessex', p. 178 who notes (p. 196) the widespread presence of Danish names in mid-eleventh-century Wessex.
159. Kjølbye-Biddle and Page, 'A Scandinavian Rune-Stone from Winchester', p. 390 and Townend, 'Contextualizing the *Knútsdrápur*', p. 520.
160. D. Stocker and P. Evison, 'Five Towns Funerals: Decoding Diversity in Danelaw Stone Sculpture', in *Vikings in the Danelaw*, ed. Graham-Campbell, Jesch and Parsons, pp. 223–44. A recent assessment of Lincoln's metalwork is in L. Ten Harkel, 'Of Towns and Trinkets: the Production and Consumption of Metalwork in Tenth-Century Lincoln', in *Everyday Life in Viking-Age Towns*, ed. Hadley and Ten Harkel, pp. 172–92.
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162. A useful consideration of London in this period remains D. Hill, 'Trends in the Development of Towns During the Reign of Ethelred II', in *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed. D. Hill, BAR British Ser. 59 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 213–26 (quotation at p. 217).
163. ASC CDE 1016; for Æthelred, Edmund, Cnut and London, see Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 260–62.
164. Hill, 'Urban Policy for Cnut', pp. 103–104.
165. A useful consideration of the support provided by the Norman duchy for the exiled West Saxon royal family after 1014, including military support, is provided by S. D. Keynes, 'The Æthelings in Normandy', *ANS* 13 (1990), pp. 173–205. A recent assessment of the foundations of this relationship is provided by P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les vikings et les relations anglo-normandes: autour du traité de 991', in *Échanges, communications et réseaux dans le haut Moyen Âge : études et textes offerts à Stéphane Lebecqz*, ed. A. Gautier and C. Martin (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 197–210.
166. Keynes, 'Æthelings in Normandy', pp. 187–98, discussing Edward and Alfred's possible 1033 attestations of Fécamp charters as well as 'King' Edward's grant to Mont-St-Michel (dated 1027×35[?1033]), with an edition of the charter at p. 204. We are grateful to David Bates for discussion on this matter.

167. See Keynes, 'Æthelings in Normandy', p. 185, for a citation (acknowledging communication with Nicholas Hooper) of ASC CDE 1022 as evidence of the use of the Isle of Wight against a possible Norman threat.
168. For a review of the evidence, see L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', in *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and E. van Houts (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 43–62, at pp. 46–50.
169. BL Stowe MS 944, fol. 6r., reproduced in *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, pp. 36–37.
170. For a discussion of the image as a coronation portrait linking Cnut directly with the West Saxon dynasty, see J. Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: the Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. C. Hicks, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 2 (Stamford, 1992), pp. 219–38, though cf. C. Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 138–39, for a view of the inclusion of a sword in the portrait of Cnut, reminding viewers of his status as a foreign invader.
171. Lawson, *Cnut*, p. 154, citing *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1035, in *Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, RS 36 (London, 5 vols, 1864–9), Vol. 2, p. 16.
172. For the competing interests of the cults of SS. Swithun and Birinus prior to Cnut's reign, see J. Crook, *English Medieval Shrines* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 83–86. To this end, it is perhaps notable that, according to a fourteenth-century manuscript, Cnut may have despatched relics of St Swithun to Denmark, although if it were Cnut's intention to bolster interest in Swithun in Denmark, this was unsuccessful in comparison to the rest of Scandinavia, where, as Michael Lapidge notes, English missionaries may have been more influential in getting Swithun incorporated in the liturgy; M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, Winchester Studies 4.2 (Oxford, 2003), p. 58.
173. Lawson, *Cnut*, pp. 149–50 and 154.
174. ASC CDE 1043. On the coronation, see Karkov, *Ruler Portraits*, p. 163; on links with the New Minster evidenced in the recording of the royal family's names in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, see S. Baxter, 'Edward the Confessor and the Succession Question', in *Edward the Confessor: the Man and the Legend*, ed. R. Mortimer (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 77–118, at pp. 99–101, citing BL MS Stowe 944, fol. 29r., reproduced in *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, plate. 9.
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The Place of Slaughter: Exploring the West Saxon Battlescape

Thomas J. T. Williams

Introduction

Highly mobile and acquisitive Viking raids have been viewed as a catalyst for changes in the practice and organisation of warfare in Anglo-Saxon England, and Wessex in particular, that resulted in reforms to the way armies were recruited and the landscape defended from the reign of Alfred onward.¹ Recent research on administrative systems and communication networks has, however, postulated deeper roots to some of the underlying structures that were utilised in meeting threats to the later Anglo-Saxon state.² It is thus no longer adequate to regard the Viking *adventus* as the watershed for all aspects of military practice and civil defence.

The word used in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to describe a location of conflict is *walstōw*, a kenning description for battlefield usually translated as ‘place of slaughter’ or ‘place of the slain’.³ This literal rendering gives the word a poetic impact in the context of the plain prose generally preferred by modern translators and editors that was perhaps less pronounced in the original vernacular.⁴ Nevertheless, it is an interesting turn of phrase in the sense that it does not abstract the concept of battle, but rather nails it down to its two key constituent elements: place and violence. Its ubiquity implies that the control of place – the physical occupation of land – was charged with powerful symbolic significance for Anglo-Saxon chroniclers. The word

also generally appears in conjunction with ideas of possession: one side or other ‘had possession of’ (*geweald ahton*) the *walstōw*.⁵ This point brings into focus a further consideration that has been referred to elsewhere: namely that violence or the memory of violence could function in the context of either public ritual or mythological narrative to enforce, communicate and legitimise claims to the ownership of land by kings and ethnic groups in Anglo-Saxon England.⁶ This chapter considers the nature of violently contested landscapes in Wessex and asks whether it is possible to reconstruct a sense of later Anglo-Saxon mentalities of war from the message of the battlefield. Examples used in this chapter will necessarily go beyond Wessex and, indeed, beyond the Viking Age; as the following discussion aims to demonstrate, it is the wider Anglo-Saxon attitude to warfare that is fundamental to any attempt at understanding the Viking Age conflict landscape in Wessex.

Battlefields in Early Medieval Britain

The study of battlefields has been dominated within archaeology – and to an even greater extent in military history – by functionalist approaches that have typically seen landscape as ‘terrain’, a term which reduces the environment to a passive object which must be used or overcome by the proper application of military strategy. The work

that best exemplifies this is the oeuvre of Alfred Higgins Burne, whose two volumes, *The Battlefields of England* and *More Battlefields of England*, are still regarded as foundational texts in the subject area.⁷ Responsibility can also be laid with Burne for the pervasive influence of the doctrine of Inherent Military Probability (IMP), a concept critiqued by Guy Halsall.⁸ IMP, in essence, foists on past war leaders the decision-making principles of a retired British Army officer – which, of course, is precisely what Alfred Burne was.⁹ This military historical attitude has had a warping influence on the way that the evidence for conflict in the past has been interpreted, forcing the behaviour of disparate groups with a variety of cultural, geographical and historical backgrounds to comply with the constructed tenets of a monolithic ‘Western’ tradition of warfare. Thus it is still common to see expressed sentiments such as those of I. P. Stephenson, who states that ‘Viking warfare belongs within western warfare ... It was thus non-ritual; they did not indulge in ritual warfare or war as play’.¹⁰ The false antithesis of ‘ritual’ and ‘real’ warfare is, moreover, a product of outdated anthropological discourse, but still holds currency in archaeological approaches to warfare.¹¹

John and Patricia Carman have drawn particular attention to this aspect of the literature, and the way that the classic historic writers on warfare – especially Sun Tzu and Carl von Clausewitz – have dominated the way that the students of war have thought and continue to think about landscape.¹² This has been determined in large part by the function that traditional military history has played in preparing officers for strategic duties, and in this regard the classic Clausewitzian pronouncement on landscape has proved most influential:

Geography and ground can influence military operations in three ways: as an obstacle to the approach, as an impediment to visibility, and as cover from fire...¹³

The possibility that organised violence conducted at highly symbolic points in the landscape may

demonstrate a stratum of ritual or performative action has thus been largely suppressed by prior assumptions about the nature of ‘serious’ warfare.

Nevertheless, it is this otherwise untapped resource for understanding war that John and Patricia Carman have made the subject of their cross-cultural research,¹⁴ identifying that ‘battlefields are carefully chosen and necessarily reflect attitudes to the appropriateness of the use of space for particular functions’. The study of battlefields should not merely be a rehearsal of prosaic assumptions about military probability, but should seek to understand a complex relationship of ideas concerning legitimacy, identity, mortality and place;¹⁵ moreover, as Anton Blok iterates, ‘[b]loodshed is associated with transitions, the crossing of boundaries between life and death, this world and the next, culture and nature, and the like...’.¹⁶ The convergence of landscape and violence in warfare means that there is good reason for battles to be regarded fundamentally as rituals through which social, religious and cosmological ideas are referred to and expressed.¹⁷

Hard evidence for the location of battlefields in Anglo-Saxon England is extremely limited. Nothing like the mass graves from Towton or Wisby, or the lead shot scatters from English Civil War battlefields have been found that would enable the archaeologist to securely delimit an area of conflict, or to reconstruct the movement of troops on the battlefield.¹⁸ Some locations have, however, been located more or less securely through the evidence of place-names, or by the presence of monuments that can be independently identified in charter bounds or by other means. The former category has generated a vast literature, and some iconic battles of the period have spawned legions of competing theories.¹⁹ The latter category is smaller, and includes sites such as Adam’s Grave in Wiltshire which can be identified with the *Wodnesbeorg* of *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entries for the years 592 and 715, and which also appears in a charter of 825.²⁰ This chapter is not the place for a general survey of the literature relating to Anglo-Saxon battlefields

or the debates around individual battlefield locations.²¹ Suffice it to say that most of what can be understood about the places where people went to meet and deal death (whether in reality or in literary/memorial invention) comes from historical documents that often leave little more than a place-name by way of a descriptive marker.

The Naming of Battlefields

The key to taking this discussion any further is a recognition that the attribution of a battle to a named place is no indicator of historicity – many early *Chronicle* entries are rife with flagrant invention.²² There can rarely be any certainty as to whether an event described occurred at all, occurred at the place described, or even whether the place itself existed before its invention as a forum for conflict. In some cases it seems battles were invented to explain a place-name,²³ and sometimes that a place may have been invented as a setting for a legendary event.²⁴ Moreover, it seems likely that some battles were ‘moved’ in the telling and ascribed to a location considered more appropriate, more likely to be known, or perhaps just a place that the chronicler knew to be in the right sort of area. All, however, have something to reveal about attitudes to warfare and landscape, and it is for this reason that issues of historicity are in many ways secondary: what place-names and memorial traditions indicate is the sense of appropriateness – the ‘battle-worthiness’, if you will – of some landscapes over others.

Many English place-names originated as topographical descriptions and, over time, these fossilized as the names of particular places. Thus a name recorded in the primary sources may be an original coinage that describes the contemporary topography, or a reference to an already established settlement; without a clear archaeological sequence it is often impossible to know which.²⁵ This is a problem when considering the names associated with Anglo-Saxon battlefields, particularly when trying to understand whether a particular place

had significance before an important event was recorded, or whether the particularisation of a place was created through that event; the distinction can be crucial.

Those names that Philip Morgan has typologised as ‘iconic’ (those which derive from a memorable aspect of the battle; Morgan uses the example of the Battle of the Standard in 1138) are sometimes easier to spot.²⁶ It seems plausible, for example, that the name *Englafeld* (871) was given to the battle of that name well after the event as part of burgeoning efforts to build a sense of English nationhood in the later ninth century.²⁷ A number of West Saxon battlefields seem to share naming elements that recall ethnic, familial or personal naming elements.²⁸ Some, like *Englafeld*, may have been applied to places associated with conflict to support invented mythologies. It is equally likely, however, that some battles and the names of protagonists were invented to explain pre-existing place-names.²⁹ In function, both types serve similar purposes: they establish mythologised landscapes where narratives of violence were used to articulate claims to land and genealogical or ethnic legitimacy.³⁰ Where things become particularly problematic is in distinguishing ‘iconic’ from ‘toponymic’ names. The battle of *Beorgford* (752; the ford by the barrow) is a case in point. The name is lost in the sense that no convincing candidate for the site has been identified.³¹ It is entirely possible that the battle was fought at, or in the environs of, a known and pre-existing landmark. This would be interesting in itself, implying that a prehistoric monument – perhaps with some ancestral significance or folklore attached to it – had been chosen as an appropriate battle-site (either by the protagonists in the field, or by a chronicler seeking a strongly symbolic landmark on which to hang his record). Alternatively, the battle (and, by extension, the place) may have gained its name through an act of posthumous memorialisation – perhaps making reference to a monument that had some direct role to play in the conflict, its prelude, or its aftermath.³² Either way, the use of a funerary monument in this

context implies ideas about landscape and warfare that engage with traditional attitudes towards the mythologised landscape, either by utilising an established and significant place or by manipulating the symbolism of ancestral mounds to memorialise contemporary actions.

These observations about the Anglo-Saxon battlescape thus recall Philip Morgan's suggestion that '[b]attle sites and battle names remain visible because they embody a system of symbols and codes which evoke meaning' and that 'the name of the battle; its physical and cultural landscape; and the ensuing narrative discourse ... were each constructed to convey a memory of the act of conquest'.³³ By looking at the locational characteristics of battles it should therefore be possible to make suggestions about the meanings encoded in landscapes of violence, particularly when distinct categories or associations seem disproportionately represented in the source material or in the geographical relationships of known places.

The West Saxon Battlescape

Guy Halsall, in a much-cited paper published in 1989,³⁴ identified the disproportionate representation of ancient monuments and water crossings in conflicts recorded in Anglo-Saxon sources between 600 and 850, excluding Viking raids and civil conflicts. This startling finding has never been fully explored, although it has been frequently repeated in discussions of Anglo-Saxon battlefield tactics as evidence that early medieval armies – as a result of primitive communication systems and lack of scouts – relied on prominent landmarks to bring opponents to battle.³⁵ This assumed lack of sophistication has recently been challenged,³⁶ and Halsall's suggestion that the recurrence of particular landscape features points to a traditional pattern of warfare in which particular locations or types of location were treated as especially propitious or appropriate for the conduct of violence has generally been overlooked in favour

of utilitarian interpretations.³⁷ Nevertheless, there is good evidence to suggest that the place of battle retained a symbolic significance well beyond the early Anglo-Saxon period.

Ryan Lavelle has sought to show a correlation between West Saxon battle-sites and royal estates, pointing out that 'thirty-seven...of Wessex's sixty-one acts of violence recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* took place within ten miles of an estate centre associated with the render of the "farm of one night", and of these, twelve took place within two miles of that centre'.³⁸ This is an important observation, as it puts in concrete terms the association of landscape and the symbolism of royal power. It should be noted that many of these encounters are classifiable as raids, ravagings or other examples of Viking predation for which no significant resistance is implied by the narrative sources and which most probably had logistical and economic motivations rather than any political engagement with West Saxon royal geography.³⁹ Nevertheless, if one follows this line of enquiry with a focussed look at those conflicts which imply fiercely contested control of specific places in the landscape, it becomes evident from narrative descriptions and place-names that ideological and symbolic factors were considered important to the memory of these events, and that these may well have invoked ideas of royal authority, genealogy and legitimacy.⁴⁰

Fortified Places

On the face of it, there is a shift in the use of fortified places in war during the late eighth century – from ancient and generally uninhabited sites to the fortified towns and manors of the late Anglo-Saxon period – that would seem to support the notion that the shock of Viking predation introduced a novel focus on inhabited settlements that stimulated the development of fortified towns and manors in the later Anglo-Saxon period. This impression of transformation, however, does not neatly coincide with the appearance of

a Scandinavian military presence in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (an observation that accords well with suggestions made recently elsewhere about the pre-Alfredian origins of burghal and lower level defensive networks in England)⁴¹ and a consideration of the description of fortified sites actually indicates a distinct change from the eighth century *Chronicle* entries onward – the very point at which the *Chronicle* can be considered to become most reliable for events in Wessex. It is possible that the room for imaginative licence afforded to ninth-century chroniclers when compiling their record of the sixth and seventh centuries led to an idealised view of early Anglo-Saxon warfare that sat in contrast to lived experience. Nevertheless, the fact that such a view existed in the ninth century suggests that older ideologies of conflict were at work and likely therefore to impinge on the practice of warfare. A nuanced consideration of how these places were described in relationship to conflict therefore has the potential to reveal aspects of the symbology of place and of military ideology as these were understood during the Viking Age in Wessex. In *Chronicle* entries relating to events before the eighth century, fortified places have a distinct identity: all six conflicts are sited at Roman or prehistoric hillforts (in the case of Bradford-on-Avon, a Roman settlement incorporating a prehistoric earthwork fortress). It seems safe to assume that *Posentesbyrg* was probably expected to be recognised as of a similar nature (*i.e.* an earthwork hillfort of some kind) to conflicts of the previous century that also compound genitive forms of personal names with a form of the word *burh* (*Wihtgaræsbyrg* (530), *Searobyrg* (552), *Beranbyrg* (556)).⁴² These early *Chronicle* entries are perhaps best understood as the authorised versions of folk memories: not fictions *per se*, but the pulling of legendary material into royally sanctioned territorial narratives that served the purposes of a West Saxon elite – Alfred and his successors in particular – that supported claims to rule through right of conquest, association with legendary heroic antecedents and exempla of

appropriate moral attributes.⁴³ These were places that embodied meaningful demonstrations of royal authority in the landscape.

There are a number of reasons why West Saxon chroniclers in the ninth century may have presented ancient landscapes in this way. Through their antiquity and monumentality, such features could exist in the imagination beyond normal constraints of time and place, serving as points of access to ritual-time where mythological narratives and archetypes could be drawn upon and replicated.⁴⁴ The fact that certain of these places are connected to legendary figures (such as *Wihtgar* and *Vortigern*⁴⁵), as well as other personal names that may once have had some significance, reinforces the sense of such places as mythologised landscapes.⁴⁶ Thus these landscapes may have stood in for narratives that functioned as archetypes for the expression of royal power, embodying the justification of kingship in violent domination of the landscape. Furthermore, the type of site chosen may well reflect a West Saxon view of the legitimising forces of tradition standing behind royal authority. The remains of British and particularly Roman fortresses may well have symbolised an older and higher order of temporal authority with which ancestral narratives could appropriately be associated. Indeed, the choice of such locations in the *Chronicle* echoes in many ways the re-purposing or re-fortification of earlier Roman and prehistoric sites that characterised the later reign of Alfred and his successors; apart from the obvious practical benefits of doing so, the overlaying of new fortifications at ancient places represented the appropriation of the past in order to support ideas of royal authority.⁴⁷ For Alfred and his successors, relatively weak genealogical claims may have acted as an additional stimulus to the creation of legitimating mythologies, as did increasing aspirations towards British *Imperium*.⁴⁸

It is possible, too, that notions of earlier and contemporary British kingship were manipulated to make similar points about the monumentalisation of martial kingship. William of Malmesbury's identification of Bradford-on-Avon, the site of a

battle recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under 652, as *Wirtgernesburg* (Vortigern's Fortress), may suggest a lingering association of native rulership with massive earthwork forts (here in combination with a Roman settlement), and the appropriateness of such places for the demonstration or contestation of claims to rule over the same territories.⁴⁹ Vortigern may, indeed, have represented a model for southern British over-kingship that would have appealed to later West Saxon kings. The continuing association of hillforts with models of kingship elsewhere in northern and western Britain may also have made such structures fitting monuments by which to locate past conflicts in a way that could lend credibility and legitimacy to the royal ancestors of West Saxon kings.⁵⁰ That hillforts were associated with ongoing British traditions is made explicit by Asser's reference to the fortifications at *Cynuit* (878) as having 'ramparts thrown up in our [*i.e.* the Welsh] fashion'.⁵¹ Folkloric memory and learned ideas of *Romanitas* could also impinge on each other; earthworks and the ruins of Roman towns could both be conceived of in supernatural terms as the work of 'Grim' (possibly a by-name for Woden) and the work of giants respectively.⁵² This in part reflects a general folkloric tendency to 'embiggen'⁵³ legendary heroes and figures from the past.⁵⁴ The name *Wodnesbeorg*, for example, implies an idea that a quasi-deific primogenitor like Woden could be the sole occupant of a colossal Neolithic chambered tomb. It seems plausible that legendary battles would also have taken on in the imagination the sort of epic proportions which only landscapes forged at the hands of swollen supernatural entities could adequately contain. The places associated with these stories may well have thus represented exaggerated exempla that informed the ongoing association of conflicts with places symbolic of royal authority in the reigns of Alfred and those who came after him.

By contrast, conflicts of the eighth century and later that imply the use of fortifications describe, for the most part, places that represent a contemporary or recent investment of royal authority – either

places identifiable in Anglo-Saxon wills and charters as royal manors or places which figure in the *Burghal Hidage* list of *de novo* fortifications and re-fortified Roman towns. There is no doubt that these places were also significant in terms of the political ideology they represented, and thus made highly appropriate settings for political authority to be challenged or asserted, as well as having clear military and logistical significance.⁵⁵ However, as Lavelle has noted, for all the mention of fortified sites in the *Chronicle*, few of these references actually specify the use of fortifications in battle, merely attributing conflict to places known to be in some degree defensible.⁵⁶ An unusually transparent example of this can be seen in the description of the battle at Winchester in 860. The *Chronicle* here states that:

a great raiding ship-army came up and destroyed Winchester; and against the raiding-army fought Ealdorman Osric with Hampshire and Ealdorman Æthelwulf with Berkshire, and put the raiding-army to flight and had possession of the place of slaughter.⁵⁷

It might be natural to suppose that this conflict took place at Winchester itself, if it were not for Asser's account which specifies that the battle took place when 'they [the Viking raiders] were returning to their ships with immense booty'.⁵⁸ In addition, it must be recognised that several of the conflicts that involved the practical use and manipulation of fortifications describe the Vikings as defenders and not the other way round.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it is significant for the symbolism of royal authority it entails that the name of a *burh* or royal manor was used in the *Chronicle* as the geographical locator for violence.⁶⁰ There is a symbolic relationship between the associations of place that appear in accounts of contested fortifications in the eighth and ninth centuries and the attribution of sixth- and seventh-century battles to ancient sites.

That these landscape associations were recognized and manipulated is strongly implied by the *Chronicle* entry for 899.⁶¹ The entry describes the attempt by Alfred's brother's son – Æthelwold – to seize power

from Alfred's son and agreed successor, Edward. To demonstrate his claim, Æthelwold seized and occupied the royal manor at Wimborne, a clear symbolic gesture of control over royal geography.⁶² Edward, by contrast, set up his camp at Badbury Rings – a huge Iron-Age hillfort. Badbury Rings has obvious similarities with other sites described as conflict locations (discussed above), and Edward's occupation of it can be seen as a deliberate strategy to reference a well-understood vocabulary of West Saxon landscape mythology. The place also has legendary associations in its own right, having been connected at various times with *Mons Badonicus*,⁶³ the site of the famous victory of the British over the Saxons recorded by Gildas and repeated by Bede.⁶⁴ Although the Saxons at this point in the narrative are depicted in an unflattering light, Ambrosius Aurelianus, the British leader, is described in no uncertain terms as an admirable and praise-worthy paragon of Christian rulership:

They were led at that time by Ambrosius Aurelianus, a virtuous man who was, by chance, the sole member of the Roman race who had survived the aforesaid storm in which his parents, who carried a royal name and rank, had perished. Thus by this leadership the Britons regained their strength and challenged their victors to victorious battle, and, with God's favour, were successful. Thenceforward, now the *ciues* [*i.e.* Britons], now the enemy, were victorious, until the year of the siege of Mount Badon, when the Britons wrought destruction upon no small number of their enemy about forty-four years after their arrival in Britain.⁶⁵

What is most striking about this extract is the extent to which the values stressed – *Romanitas*, legitimate royal descent, divine patronage and effective, aggressive military leadership (directed particularly towards heathen invaders) – were likely to appeal to the ideals of West Saxon kingship at the end of the ninth century. The invocation of this exemplum by Edward in his occupation of Badbury could thus be interpreted on one level as the manipulation of a mythology that would have sent powerful signals to those who understood the symbolism of the place.

There is every reason to believe that the story had some circulation in the West Saxon court; Bede's history was probably translated into Old English between 883 and 930,⁶⁶ and was certainly known and used by West Saxon chroniclers (although the Aurelius episode was omitted from both the translation and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*). The story had, moreover, made its way into the *Historia Brittonum* in the early ninth century, by which time Ambrosius had morphed into Arthur.⁶⁷ Given the links between Alfred's court and Welsh learning (personified in Asser), it is no great stretch of the imagination to hypothesise the currency of this narrative in educated and aristocratic West Saxon circles.⁶⁸ Whatever the truth of the legend, let alone its association with Badbury Rings, we should not suppose that educated West Saxon elites were any less capable of coming to the same conclusions as their Victorian counterparts.

The organization of symbolic geography in this incident is therefore stark. As Barbara Yorke has pointed out, Æthelwold, perceived as an illegitimate claimant to royal authority, is linked through significant narrative and symbolic similarities with Cynewulf and Cyneheard as exempla of failed royal authority, a comparison underscored by the occupation of a fortified site by royal claimants in both cases.⁶⁹ Edward's use of a landscape that recalled the triumphant conquests of mythical ancestors and the might of supernatural builders sent a perfectly contrasting message of deep-rooted legitimacy. The outcome is presented as inevitable: faced with authority made manifest in a landscape that drew on powerful symbolic associations, Æthelwold slunk away in the night rather than face battle.⁷⁰ The implication of this episode – and the Cynewulf and Cyneheard anecdote – is that, although these places were associated with royal authority, the active military defence of such a place was not considered to be behaviour entirely appropriate for real kings deserving of praise. Real kings, one might argue, defeated their enemies in open places, away from home and hearth, and drew on deeper ancestral/mythological associations

from which they ultimately drew legitimacy and depth in time.

This argument has potential implications for how the conduct of entirely illegitimate violence – especially that carried out by foreign heathens – may have been characterised in the source material. Summarising the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* account of the depredations of the Viking army that ultimately rampaged through Wessex in 1006, John of Worcester offered the following assessment of the contrasting attitudes of English and Viking armies:

Then in July an immense fleet of Danes came to England and entered the port of Sandwich; the Danes destroyed whatever they came across with fire and slaughter, and now in Kent, now in Sussex, they took very great booty. For this reason King Æthelred gathered an army from Mercia and Wessex, and resolved to fight fiercely against them. But to no extent did they [the Danes] wish to fight an open battle [*palam configere*] with it. They pillaged constantly, now here, now there, and soon returned to their ships, as was their custom, and in that way they harassed the army of the English throughout the autumn.⁷¹

It should be borne in mind, as John evidently did, that the objectives of the two sides were markedly different. The raiding army wanted to get home with as few casualties and as much booty as possible, whereas Æthelred needed to inflict as much damage as possible while he had the opportunity, not just to prevent further thefts and outrages on the population but also, presumably, to kill as many of the enemy as possible so that they could not come back and do it again. Moreover, John of Worcester may well have simply made inference from whatever version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was his primary source. It should not be assumed that this passage represents any special insight. Nevertheless, his presentation of this episode reflects the emphasis in West Saxon sources on battle as a royal and praiseworthy duty, and battle avoidance as the province of aberrant and unworthy foes. Seen in this light, Æthelred's apparently successful defence of London against

Swein Forkbeard in 1013 takes on undertones of cowardice and incompetence entirely appropriate to the CDE Chronicler's usual attitude towards that most unfortunate of late Anglo-Saxon kings.⁷² In *Beowulf*, too, Hrothgar – venerable though he is – can be thought of as a failed king because he is incapable of keeping his own hall free from attack. As discussed below, it is the incursion of Grendel *into* the hall that lends the early part of the poem its visceral horror. Beowulf by contrast, in his fight with Grendel's mother and again with the dragon, proves his kingworthiness by taking the fight quite explicitly beyond the borders of human encultured space and into the halls of his enemies. These battlefields – the wooded mere, the burial mound – are emphatically marginal places.⁷³

Battles

Lavelle has connected the Anglo-Saxon decision to fight outside the walls of Maldon with a heroic ideology expressed in an interpolation in the Old English version of Orosius' *History of the Wars against the Pagans* that describes the decision by the Romans to mount their defence against Hannibal outside the walls of Rome in order to demonstrate their courage.⁷⁴ The Old English poem *Judith* also expresses a similar decision to take the fight to the enemy beyond the ramparts and, although this is not a radical departure from the Biblical text, the overall treatment of this episode is sufficiently modified to suggest that this was considered an important element of the narrative.⁷⁵ It is notable, too, that the *Chronicle's* great battle poem – *Brunanburh* – is also identified by the presence of a fortress of some sort, despite it having played no apparent role in the description of the battle. The significance of the name should perhaps be considered alongside those West Saxon examples discussed above that compound a personal name with an ancient monument.⁷⁶ This type of place has been characterised as serving to connect individual action with the memory of legendary heroic figures, acting as a legitimising presence or even offering

some recourse to supernatural agency on the battlefield.⁷⁷ But the *burh* here, as may be implied at Maldon, also serves to set up an ironic relationship between place-name and action that emphasises the heroism of the protagonists; although fortifications were present, the protagonists chose to ignore them. One might consider whether the number of West Saxon conflict landscapes that can be identified by the presence of fortifications might in fact point to a strategy by which the warrior virtues of Anglo-Saxon armies were emphasised though the decision to fight in the shadow of the ramparts but not behind them. Cultural values of this sort would explain much regarding the curious absence of clearly defensible manors in Anglo-Saxon archaeology, whether in Wessex or elsewhere, before the tenth century.⁷⁸ Set alongside this is clear evidence of a general preference for holding other types of assembly – including other varieties of dispute resolution – in the open air. Judicial processes, church synods and administrative assemblies all seem to have taken place in broadly similar, extramural settings.⁷⁹ The implication is that the ideal battle – itself a quasi-judicial assembly with ritual overtones – was something best done ‘outside’.

That a sense of the ‘ideal battle’ should have existed in the ninth century is made probable by a more general consideration of the role of inhabited places as locators of conflict. As described above, inhabited places only become visible as battle-sites in Anglo-Saxon records from the point at which the *Chronicle* becomes increasingly reliable (*i.e.* from the later eighth century onward).⁸⁰ Similarly, records of raids and ravagings seemingly coincide with periods when eye-witness accounts of events can most plausibly be postulated as exerting an influence on chroniclers (the two incidents recorded as raids in Wessex in the seventh century both rely on Bede’s account). Halsall has also commented on the relative infrequency of what he termed ‘endemic warfare’ from records of the seventh century, suggesting that the memory of events considered unremarkable or forgettable faded before they could be recorded (and not that

raiding and harrying were absent from the early warfare of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms).⁸¹ Thus, Halsall argues, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* offers a partial account that emphasises the significant battles that formed part of a stratum of serious, ‘large-scale’ warfare made memorable by its political consequence. Lavelle has also made the point that comparison with the *Annales Cambriae* suggests the *Chronicle* to be a partial record of the scale or ubiquity of conflict in the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, when *Chronicle* entries were being written contemporaneously with the events they described.⁸² The implication of this must be that some events – generally small-scale raids into British territory – were deliberately omitted from the *Chronicle*, either because their ubiquity made them unremarkable, or because aristocratic military virtues were better reflected by grander and more formalised displays of violence.⁸³ Similarly, the emphasis on battles in the earlier *Chronicle* accounts – both those of the seventh century remarked upon by Halsall and the dubious accounts of the sixth century – may reflect how a retrospective compiler of the *Chronicle* in the late ninth century chose to represent idealised or culturally circumscribed ideas of what warfare meant and how it should be conducted and remembered.

There is, therefore, a good case to be made for a West Saxon ideology of warfare that considered certain types of encounter – and, by extension, landscape – as more appropriate to the resolution of conflict. Ancient sites and water crossings had a prominence, as Halsall identified in relation to the period 600–850, that seems to have been enduring.⁸⁴ Other types of landscape, as well as non-topographical elements, personal names in particular, seem also to have been important. The significance of mythologised sites in relation to fortifications has already been discussed above and elsewhere,⁸⁵ but the importance of this sort of place is replicated across the wider conflict landscape.⁸⁶ Funerary landscapes and personal, ethnic or royal signifiers are also well represented, an observation that is only strengthened by desk

and field analysis of investigable sites.⁸⁷ It is notable that the landscape feature by which we tend to define conflict locations in modern vocabulary – the field – is only very infrequently implied in conflict toponymy by its OE ancestor term, *feld*, and may well form a special category for that very reason.⁸⁸ What these sorts of associations may have meant from an Anglo-Saxon perspective is the subject of ongoing research, and this is not the place to attempt a detailed summary. Some general observations may, however, be illustrative of the semiotic baggage that battlefield landscapes and memories of them carried and the ways in which they connected the experience of warfare in the late West Saxon state to the idea of continuity with a mythologised past and to other intangible aspects of the Anglo-Saxon world-view.

It is possible that the suggestion of wilderness, antiquity and uninhabited space thrown up by the naming of some battle-sites relates on some level to deeply-embedded ideas about space, dwelling, alienage and the nature of heroic violence.⁸⁹ The poem *Beowulf*, in particular is an important text through which these themes can be approached. With its stark differentiation between heartland and wasteland, *Beowulf* presents Grendel's entry into Heorot as a profound and terrifying violation of human encultured space by a monster who represents the fear of a world beyond the borders:

Wæs se grimma gæst	Grendel haten,
Mære mearcstapa,	se þe moras heold,
Fen ond fæsten	
So was the grim ghoul	Grendel called,
Famed prowler of borders	who held the moors
The fen and fastness ⁹⁰	

Borderlands and wilderness represent in *Beowulf* the natural home of monsters, and it is into this hostile environment that the hero travels to confront Grendel's fearsome mother; later in the poem the hero fights a dragon that has made its home within a burial mound.⁹¹ Other Anglo-Saxon poems and saints' *lives* similarly emphasise the role of haunted and desolate places as loci for

conflict with monstrous adversaries: St Guthlac fights a horde of demons within a burial mound;⁹² St Wilfrid confronts a pagan wizard who stands atop a barrow to issue heathen curses and direct his forces in battle.⁹³ It is striking, given this, that several West Saxon battle-sites can be placed near the margins of territorial units and geographical areas and/or in association with prehistoric burials. Sometimes this can be seen to be explicitly so, as when a named prehistoric feature occurs in a charter boundary clause (as at *Wodnesbeorg*⁹⁴) or, more often, when the position of a conflict site coincides with a natural barrier or transitional zone (as at Penselwood⁹⁵) or by river crossings that also clearly mark real and symbolic boundaries.⁹⁶ A sense of haunted and marginal places is also present in the funerary associations of many conflict names (*i.e.* those that compound the elements *beorg* or *hlæw* (mound, burial mound) with a personal name or other term: *Wodnesbeorg* again, as well as *Beorgford*, *Wicganbeorg*, *Cwicchelmeshlæw*⁹⁷), as well as in associations with the deserted and mysterious workings of former peoples (or giants). These are places that, on the basis of wide-ranging evidence, have been convincingly characterised as 'places of fear' in the later Anglo-Saxon period.⁹⁸ This seems fitting in the light of the foregoing discussion; by seeking battle in landscapes characterised by their sinister and marginal aspects, Anglo-Saxon warriors may have felt themselves to be standing resolute in the face of the inexorably encroaching darkness, demonstrating the fatalistic courage that is the hallmark of the heroic ethos and an aspect of Anglo-Saxon cosmology perceptible in aspects of the poetic corpus.⁹⁹ Moreover, as well as being the most appropriate places to deal with threats and horrors, landscapes with these associations may also have served as the proper arenas for the performance of violent action, behaviour which itself brings in train a frisson of danger and transgression that hovers at the limits of social acceptability.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the word *mære* – translated as 'famed' in the lines from *Beowulf* above – has the alternative meaning 'boundary',¹⁰¹ an ambiguity that might indicate

an underlying association between the winning of fame and social boundaries. Locations that lay at or beyond the conceptual borders of 'normal' human space could thus not only represent the natural home of the alien, but could also function as containers for the dangerous energies unleashed in warfare.

That a broader conceptual relationship was made between the human and the monstrous aggressor is suggested by the terminology applied to both: *waelwulfas* ('slaughter-wolves') is the name given to Vikings in *The Battle of Maldon*; Grendel is described as *hearowearh* 'blood-wolf/outlaw' in *Beowulf* (line 1267). One impression that can be gleaned from the poetic corpus (from texts, for example, such as *Fortunes of Men*, *Wulf and Eadwacer*, and *Andreas*) is that the boundary between man and beast could be fluid, especially during episodes of socially transgressive violence.¹⁰² Bestial identities seem in fact to have been self-consciously adopted and displayed in Viking warrior culture,¹⁰³ and this can only have reinforced the cognitive association between Viking raiders and the monsters at the margins of society. That Viking aggression was seen more generally in transgressive terms is implied by the word used to routinely describe their armies. Deriving from the laws of the West Saxon King Ine (recorded in the preface to Alfred's own lawcode), the word *here* explicitly connotes criminal behaviour on a substantial scale.¹⁰⁴ That Vikings were viewed as socially and morally aberrant is a familiar trope in the primary source material and their otherness is reinforced by the cultural differences that led them to pursue warfare in a way that was perceived as different (and therefore appalling) by their adversaries.¹⁰⁵ Even their active use of fortified camps might have contributed to this moral opprobrium.

Eðandun

In the light of all these observations, it is perhaps worth considering one of the most famous West Saxon battlefields of all, and the place where the

role of the Danes in Wessex was to reach a climax. The name *Eðandun* has received considerable attention over the years from place-name scholars, and the general location of the battlefield has been pretty firmly established as being within the environs of the Wiltshire village of Edington.¹⁰⁶ The name *Eðandun* is first mentioned in 852–5, as the place where a charter of the West Saxon king Æthelwulf was attested.¹⁰⁷ Alfred later bequeathed land at Edington in his will and, in the tenth century, royal grants were made to the royal foundation of Romsey Abbey.¹⁰⁸ The place was thus almost certainly a royal estate centre (presumably with a hall) in the possession of West Saxon kings before and after the battle in 878 and therefore had the connotations of royal authority that seem to have been appropriate to West Saxon conflict sites. Edington lies on the route of the Wessex Ridgeway, and Edington was only a mile or so south from the meeting place of Whorwellsdown hundred (Figure 3.1[a]),¹⁰⁹ a place to which it was connected by a droveway of plausible antiquity.¹¹⁰ This is potentially significant given the probable association of military musters with established assembly sites, both generally and in the events leading up to the battle;¹¹¹ the relationship of the battle-site to a major route-way and a royal estate centre plausibly situates it within a well-organised administrative landscape. To the west of Edington is the settlement of Bratton, which gives its name to the Iron Age hillfort situated on a highly prominent hill to the south-west (NMR ST 95 SW 1; Figure 3.1[b], Figure 3.2). That hill is named Westbury Hill on first edition Ordnance Survey maps, although it is unclear whether the name (the 'west *byrig*') originally applied to the hillfort or to the town of Westbury that lies a little further to the west. Immediately to the south of Bratton Camp, the high ground is labelled by the Ordnance Survey as 'Warden's Down' and it is tempting to read in this place-name an echo of a look-out station of the type discussed more generally by John Baker.¹¹² This combination of elements, occurring together in a landscape of



Figure 3.1. Map of the region around Edington and Bratton Camp, Wiltshire (a: meeting place of Whorwellsdown Hundred; b: Bratton Camp (see Figure 3.2 for detail); c: Edington Hill (see Figure 3.3. for detail)), from the first edition Ordnance Survey County Series 1:10560 (1889). (Not reproduced to scale) (© Crown Copyright and Database Right 2013. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence))

military activity, is perhaps suggestive of the sort of defensive network reconstructed by Reynolds and Brookes for the Avebury region.¹¹³

There is more to it, however; a number of striking features also associate Edington with prehistoric monuments and transitional spaces. O. S. Anderson gave the following explanation of the name *Whorwellsdown*:

The first el[ement] of the name is OE *hwerfel*, *hwyrfel*, the source of Mod[ern] E[nglish] *whirl*, *whorl* 'fly-wheel of spindle' etc. ... The reference may be to some stone circle or circular earthwork now vanished. Second el. OE *dun* 'hill', 'rising ground'; hence 'hill with a circle'. The 'down' referred to in

the name is a gently rising, rounded hill without anything characteristic in its shape.¹¹⁴

This raises the possibility of a military/administrative landscape focussed around prehistoric landmarks, a pattern observable in other conflict landscapes in Wessex.¹¹⁵ The Wessex Ridgeway that skirts the modern towns of Bratton and Edington marks the edge of a chalk ridge that rises savagely to the south by over 100 m, a natural boundary that also marks the border between the hundreds of Whorwellsdown and Westbury. Both Bratton Camp and Edington Hill stand high on this ridge and thus mark out a profound geological and territorial transition in the landscape. It is – in every

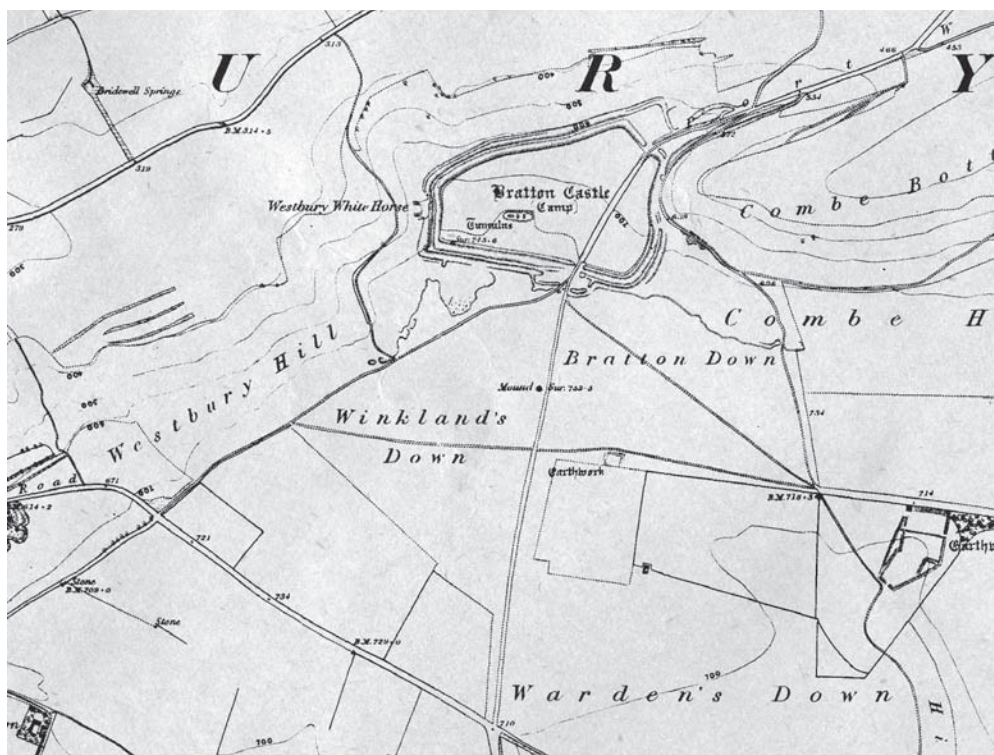


Figure 3.2. Bratton Camp. Detail of the environs of Bratton Camp and Warden's Down, from the first edition Ordnance Survey County Series 1:10560 (1889). (Not reproduced to scale) (© Crown Copyright and Database Right 2013. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence))



Figure 3.3. Edington Hill. Detail of the region around Edington Hill, from the first edition Ordnance Survey County Series 1:10560 (1889). (Not reproduced to scale) (© Crown Copyright and Database Right 2013. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence))

sense – a liminal place. In addition, the first half of the compound name *Eðandun* may derive from the Old English word *ieðan* ('barren', 'wasteland'), giving the interesting possibility of a topographical name meaning 'barren hill'.¹¹⁶ Although the name in this case predates the battle, it is intriguing that it nevertheless supports the conception of this being a landscape touched by the wild.

Moreover, Edington Hill is the location of a number of mounds and tumuli, features that can be associated with both landscapes of fear and judicial violence and with places of ancestral memory (Figure 3.1[c]; Figure 3.3).¹¹⁷ Compounding these associations is the nearby presence of Bratton Camp, the Iron Age hillfort enclosing a Neolithic long-barrow (NMR ST 95 SW 2). It is hard to believe that the ancient monumental remains of this landscape did not exert a pull on a West Saxon imagination steeped in the memory of royal precursors whose heroic victories were claimed at ancient strongholds, or of quasi-deific ancestors whose names attached themselves to equally massive and hoary tombs (cf. Woden's Barrow). The long-barrow at Bratton Camp is unnamed, but, given the evidence of Anglo-Saxon charter bounds elsewhere, it is highly probable that some sort of folkloric encrustation had accumulated at this tomb by the late ninth century. This supposition is made all the more likely by the discovery, in the nineteenth century, of three secondary inhumations cut into the long barrow (almost certainly early Anglo-Saxon burials) and a cremation platform.¹¹⁸ An eighteenth-century excavation of a Bronze Age round barrow at the southern entrance to the camp also revealed an apparent Saxon inhumation with axe and sword (NMR ST 95 SW 24).¹¹⁹ One can only speculate how long the memory of warrior ancestors buried in such places might have lingered in the collective memory. It is thus impossible to know what genealogical associations this landscape and its funerary monuments may have held for the West Saxon dynasty in the later ninth century – if, indeed, any at all – but the evidence of comparable

conflict site toponymy and the way in which the later Anglo-Saxons interacted with the material remains of the past make it at least plausible that this landscape held meaning for the people who knew it.

It is also impossible, without archaeological corroboration, to say whether or not the battle was actually fought in this landscape, or whether the attribution of the conflict to this place was made after the event on account of its symbolic appropriateness. It is worth considering, however, that Alfred would have been as aware as his chroniclers of the communicative value of landscape in making a dramatic and visceral statement, and could well have chosen his battleground accordingly. The name recalls that other great 'E' battle – the battle of *Ellendun* in 825 – at which Alfred's West Saxon precursor, King Egbert, defeated the Mercians and established West Saxon hegemony over southern England. It is possible that in the alliteration of the names and the comparability of the events they commemorated, Alfred and his chroniclers hoped to recall that earlier moment, casting Alfred as a king in the same mould, forging a new sense of a Greater Wessex. It is striking too that Alfred's victory was preceded in the *Chronicle* and in Asser's account by the mustering of forces at *Eggbryhtes stan* (Egbert's Stone); perhaps this detail was intended to compound this connection, the whole sequence of events as presented in the *Chronicle* deliberately constructed as a theatrical manipulation of the associations of place. It is notable that in the aftermath of the battle, the routed Viking army is described fleeing back to the *geweorc* (the 'fortification', probably the Viking camp at the former West Saxon royal manor at Chippenham), where they were besieged and ultimately forced to terms. The emphasis placed on this by the chronicler can perhaps be understood in the light of the foregoing discussion as a means by which to underscore the heroic qualities of Alfred's triumph in the field and, by contrast, the cowardice and unworthiness of his adversaries.

Conclusion

In 1911, G. K. Chesterton wrote these lines about the battle of Edington:

But the other day under a wild sunset and moonrise I passed the place which is best reputed as Ethandune, a high, grim upland, partly bare and partly shaggy; like that savage and sacred spot in those great imaginative lines about the demon lover and the waning moon. The darkness, the red wreck of sunset, the yellow and lurid moon, the long fantastic shadows, actually created that sense of monstrous incident which is the dramatic side of landscape. The bare grey slopes seemed to rush downhill like routed hosts; the dark clouds drove across like riven banners; and the moon was like a golden dragon, like the Golden Dragon of Wessex.

As we crossed a tilt of the torn heath I saw suddenly between myself and the moon a black shapeless pile higher than a house. The atmosphere was so intense that I really thought of a pile of dead Danes, with some phantom conqueror on the top of it. Fortunately I was crossing these wastes with a friend who knew more history than I; and he told me that this was a barrow older than Alfred, older than the Romans, older perhaps than the Britons; and no man knew whether it was a wall or a trophy or a tomb. Ethandune is still a drifting name; but it gave me a queer emotion to think that, sword in hand, as the Danes poured with the torrents of their blood down to Chippenham, the great king may have lifted up his head and looked at that oppressive shape, suggestive of something and yet suggestive of nothing; may have looked at it as we did, and understood it as little as we.¹²⁰

‘Ethandune’ no longer ‘drifts’ as freely as it once did,¹²¹ and the place is now pretty firmly established as the place Chesterton visited with his friend. His words are a magical evocation of the cross-cutting relationship between landscape and memory, and a reminder of the power of ancient places to move and transform the imaginations of the people who encounter them; all that might be added is that we now understand them a little better, and suspect that Alfred did as well.

Brief consideration of the site of the battle of

Edington has shown how detailed consideration of individual sites can throw up a welter of detail that goes some way to demonstrating that the places where the West Saxons fought their enemies were inherently meaningful and that those meanings were richly textured and are – to some degree – reconstructable. One of the key suggestions made here is that these meanings were related fundamentally to West Saxon understandings of the past and of the local landscape; they were in essence traditional, and the West Saxon battlescape reflects this more than it reflects any conspicuous Danish influence.

This is not to say that the Vikings were unaware of these associations or created no meanings from the landscape themselves,¹²² but rather that in the names and records of those events we are left with an image of the role of conflict filtered through an Anglo-Saxon warrior ethic. This world-view, so it would seem, placed a high value on fighting battles in open places that resonated with heroic ideals and legitimising ancestral mythologies, a ‘traditional’ attitude to warfare that remained remarkably consistent throughout later West Saxon (and, more widely, Anglo-Saxon) history. For an invading army ‘to have possession of the place of slaughter’ was thus far more powerful a statement than a simple record of victory or defeat; it represented a profound shock to the collective identity. However, by controlling the memory of conflict, the West Saxons ensured that, regardless of who won or lost, these places of the slain would remain forever in their possession.¹²³

Notes

1. See in particular the influential work of Richard Abels, especially *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Berkeley, CA, 1988); ‘English Logistics and Military Administration, 871–1066: the Impact of the Viking Wars’, in *Military Aspects of Scandinavian Society in a European Perspective AD 1–1300*, ed. A. N. Jørgensen and B. L. Clausen (Copenhagen, 1997), pp. 257–65; also J. Haslam, ‘King Alfred and the Vikings: Strategies and Tactics 876–886 AD’, *ASSAH* 13 (2006), pp. 122–54.

2. J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex: Towards a Reassessment of Anglo-Saxon Strategic Landscapes', below, pp. 70–86; also 'Explaining Anglo-Saxon Military Efficiency: the Landscape of Mobilisation' (forthcoming) and, more generally, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age* (Leiden, 2013).
3. The second rendering of this compound noun suggests that battlefields were defined by the dead, as much as by the act of killing. J. Bosworth and T. Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (Oxford, 1898), p. 1154 (online version at <<http://www.bosworthtoller.com>>). It also brings to mind the image of the battlefield littered with the remains of the dead, and the potent multi-sensory evocation of death that may have clung to these places long after the conflict event. As Ryan Lavelle has pointed out, Norman writers evoked these images powerfully in descriptions of the aftermath of Stamford Bridge and Hastings (Orderic Vitalis and the *Carmen de Hastings proelio*, both quoted in R. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 305–306). The recurrent Old English and Old Norse poetic *Topos* of the 'beasts of battle' – the wolf, raven and eagle, carrion eaters of the dead whose presence is routinely evoked in battle poetry (for which see J. Jesch, 'Eagles, Ravens and Wolves: Beasts of Battle, Symbols of Victory and Death', in *The Scandinavians from the Vendel Period to the Tenth Century: an Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. J. Jesch (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 251–71) – is also highly suggestive in this regard (indeed, the *Carmen's* references to worms, wolves, birds and dogs are perhaps influenced by these or related traditions).
4. For example, see *ASC* 855.
5. Lavelle touches on this point: *Alfred's Wars*, p. 299.
6. P. Sims-Williams, 'The Settlement of England in Bede and the Chronicle', *ASE* 12 (1983), pp. 1–41; H. Härke 'Material Culture as Myth: Weapons in Anglo-Saxon Graves', in *Burial and Society: the Chronological and Social Analysis of Archaeological Burial Data*, ed. C. K. Jensen and K. Høilund Nielsen (Aarhus, 1997), pp. 119–27; T. J. T. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare in Anglo-Saxon England and the Viking Campaign of 1006', *EME* 23 (2015), 329–59.
7. A. H. Burne, *The Battlefields of England* (London, 1950) and *More Battlefields of England* (London, 1953); for their influence see, for example, P. Marren, *Battles of the Dark Ages: British Battlefields AD 410 to 1065* (Barnsley, 2006).
8. G. Halsall, *Warfare and Society in the Barbarian West, 450–900* (London, 2003).
9. A cynical observation might be that Burne's principle of IMP functioned most successfully as a means to rationalise his own imaginative recreations of past battles and to align the mind-set of historical kings and generals with his own military instincts – instincts which he evidently considered infallible.
10. I. P. Stephenson, *Viking Warfare* (Stroud, 2012), p. 77; for further criticism of this view, see my review in *Saga Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research* 26 (2012), pp. 128–31.
11. On this see especially L. H. Keeley, *War before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (Oxford, 1996); A. E. Nielsen and W. H. Walker (eds), *Warfare in Cultural Context: Practice, Agency and the Archaeology of Violence* (Tucson, AZ, 2009).
12. J. Carman and P. Carman, *Bloody Meadows: Investigating Landscapes of Battle* (Stroud, 2006).
13. C. von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. M. Howard and P. Paret (Princeton, NJ, 1976), p. 348. For the influence of these ideas on the preoccupations of military history and archaeology, see, for example, P. Doyle and M. R. Bennett (eds), *Fields of Battle: Terrain in Military History* (Dordrecht, 2002) and P. Hill and J. Wileman, *Landscapes of War: the Archaeology of Aggression and Defence* (Stroud, 2002). For the strategic implications of landscape as 'terrain' in early medieval Wessex see Baker and Brookes, 'Landscapes of Violence', below.
14. J. Carman, 'Bloody Meadows: The Place of Battle', in *The Familiar Past? Archaeologies of Later Historical Britain*, ed. S. Tarlow and S. West (London, 1999), pp. 233–45; J. Carman and P. Carman 'Beyond Military Archaeology: Battlefields as a Research Resource', in *Fields of Conflict: Progress and Prospect in Battlefield Archaeology*, ed. P. Freeman and A. Pollard, BAR International Ser. 958 (Oxford, 2001) pp. 275–82; Carman and Carman, *Bloody Meadows*; J. Carman and A. Harding, 'Introduction', in *Ancient Warfare: Archaeological Perspectives*, ed. J. Carman and A. Harding (Stroud, 1999), pp. 1–10.
15. Carman and Carman, *Bloody Meadows* (quotation at p. 2); Carman, 'Bloody Meadows', p. 237.
16. A. Blok, 'The Enigma of Senseless Violence', in *Meanings of Violence: A Cross Cultural Perspective*, ed. G. Aijmer and J. Abbink (Oxford, 2000), pp. 23–38, at p. 30.
17. See also A. Andrén, 'A World of Stone: Warrior Culture, Hybridity, and Old Norse Cosmology', in *Old Norse Religion in Long-term Perspectives*, ed. A. Andrén, K. Jennbert and C. Raudvere (Lund, 2006), pp. 33–38.

18. V. Fiorato, A. Boylston and K. Knüsel (eds), *Blood Red Roses: The Archaeology of a Mass Grave from the Battle of Towton AD 1461* (Oxford, 2000); B. Thordeman (ed.), *Armour from the Battle of Wisby 1361* (Stockholm, 1939); G. Foard, 'The Archaeology of Attack: Battles and Sieges of the English Civil War', in *Fields of Conflict: Progress and Prospect in Battlefield Archaeology*, ed. Freeman and Pollard, pp. 87–104. The Ridgeway mass grave may yet change this picture but as yet there is nothing that would enable the historian to tie the dramatic burial to a recorded event. See A. Boyle, 'Death on the Dorset Ridgeway: the Discovery and Excavation of an Early Medieval Mass Burial', and R. Lavelle, 'Law, Death and Peacemaking in the "Second Viking Age": an Ealdorman, his King, and Some "Danes" in Wessex', below, pp. 109–21 and 131–34.
19. See, for example, P. Cavill, 'The Place-Name Debate', in *The Battle of Brunanburh: A Casebook*, ed. M. Livingston (Exeter, 2011), pp. 327–50, and Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 308–14.
20. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 272 (AD 825).
21. There is currently no scholarly synthesis treating this subject in detail. Chapters in Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars* and Halsall, *Warfare and Society* treat specific aspects and themes. Peter Marren's *Battles of the Dark Ages: British Battlefields AD 410 to 1065* (Barnsley, 2009) is an excellent and well-researched overview for the non-specialist.
22. As Sims-Williams puts it, 'the accounts of the settlement in Bede and the *Chronicle*, in so far as they do not derive from Gildas, are of value only for the light they shed on early Anglo-Saxon dynastic, heroic and topographical tradition and learned historiography.' ('Settlement of England', p. 41).
23. See, for example, the aetiological battle legends associated with the demonstrably fictional 'Port' (ASC 501), 'Natanleod' (ASC 508) and 'Wihtgar' (ASC 530 and 534), characters who appear to have been invented to explain pre-existing place-names (See notes in M. Swanton (ed. and trans.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (London, 1996; rev. edn, 2001), p. 29).
24. *Fēðanleag* (ASC 584) may be of this type. Gelling offered the interpretation 'Battle Wood' as an extrapolation from the words *fēðan* (to go on foot; troop of foot-soldiers) and *leag* (woodland clearing, wood): M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire* (Cambridge, 2 vols, 1953–4), Vol. 1, pp. 238–9; Sims-Williams, 'Settlement of England', pp. 29–30, offered the alternative explanation that the battle was invented to explain a pre-existing place-name. The fact that the place-name is not otherwise attested and has no other historical, political or mythological significance makes this hypothesis unlikely; it is hard to imagine what would have motivated a West Saxon chronicler to gratuitously invent a fictional incident to explain away a minor place-name. It is far more likely that a sense of place was constructed around a legendary event that was believed to have had a historical reality. The naming of places in relation to mythological narratives is a well established factor in the social construction of landscape, and West Saxon folklore should not be discounted as an etymological basis for some place-names; on this, see C. Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 18–19.
25. On this point it is appropriate to quote an email from John Baker in response to the author's query about the battle at *Beorgford* (ASC 752): 'It is a description in that the second element is given in the dative, as an active element of vocabulary, but that's the same with many place-names – they start as descriptions and become fossilised, but still sometimes have inflexional endings. Sometimes you can track the process – so you get boundary clauses where some of the boundary marks use definite articles or weak adjectives, indicating a description for the purpose of the bounds, while others have no article and sometimes a strong adjectival ending. It's like saying "to the ox ford" instead of "to Oxford".' J. Baker, *pers. comm.*, 14 March, 2012.
26. P. Morgan, 'The Naming of Medieval Battlefields', in *War and Society in Medieval and Early Modern Britain*, ed. D. Dunn (Liverpool, 2000), pp. 34–52.
27. A. Reynolds, 'Archaeological Correlates for Anglo-Saxon Military Activity in Comparative Perspective', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. J. Baker, S. Brookes and A. Reynolds (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 1–38.
28. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'.
29. See n. 23, above.
30. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'.
31. Gelling, *Place-Names of Oxfordshire*, p. 311.
32. Barrows are well attested as assembly sites and in association with execution cemeteries. On these themes see H. Williams, 'Assembling the Dead', and S. J. Semple, 'Locations of Assembly in Early Anglo-Saxon England', both in *Assembly Places and Practices in Medieval Europe*, ed. A. Pantos and S. J. Semple (Dublin, 2004), pp. 109–34 and 135–54; A. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs* (Oxford, 2009).
33. Morgan, 'The Naming of Medieval Battlefields', p. 37.

34. G. Halsall, 'Anthropology and the Study of Pre-Conquest Warfare and Society', in *Weapons and Warfare in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. S. C. Hawkes (Oxford, 1989), pp. 155–78.
35. K. Cathers, "'Markings on the Land" and Early Medieval Warfare in the British Isles', in *Fields of Battle*, ed. Doyle and Bennett, pp. 9–18; P. Hill, *The Anglo-Saxons at War* (Barnsley, 2012); Halsall, *Warfare and Society*, pp. 157 and 160.
36. Baker and Brookes, 'Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex'; A. Reynolds and S. Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age: a Case Study of the Avebury Region', in *Early Medieval Art and Archaeology in the Northern World: Studies in Honour of James Graham-Campbell*, ed. A. Reynolds and L. Webster (Leiden, 2013), pp. 561–606.
37. Halsall, 'Anthropology and the Study of Pre-Conquest Warfare and Society'.
38. R. Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: the Royal Estates of Wessex', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. A. D. Jorgensen (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 187–219, at p. 200.
39. Abels, 'English Logistics and Military Administration'; see, however, Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare', and above, p. 49, for brief arguments in support of a Scandinavian awareness of Anglo-Saxon geographical symbolism.
40. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'.
41. See Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 209–63 and, especially, Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*, pp. 381–426.
42. For a discussion of the terminology see Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*, pp. 30–34.
43. Sims-Williams, 'Settlement of England'; Härke, 'Material Culture as Myth'; B. Yorke, 'The Representation of Early West Saxon History', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Jorgensen, pp. 141–59.
44. R. Bradley, 'Time Regained: The Creation of Continuity', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 140 (1987), pp. 1–17; E. Hirsch, 'Introduction', in *The Anthropology of Landscape*, ed. E. Hirsch and M. O'Hanlon (Oxford, 1995); J. M. Hill, 'Gods at the Borders: Northern Myth and Anglo-Saxon Heroic Story', in *Myth in Early Northwest Europe*, ed. S. O. Glosecki (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 241–56.
45. For the latter, see above, p. 40.
46. On the general concept of the mythologised landscape as it relates to early medieval Europe, see S. Brink, 'Mythologising Landscape: Place and Space of Cult and Myth', in *Kontinuitäten und Brüche in der Religionsgeschichte. Festschrift für Anders Hultgard zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 23. 12. 2001*, ed. M. Stausberg (Berlin, 2001), pp. 76–112.
47. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, p. 213; D. Hill 'The Origins of Alfred's Urban Policies', in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. T. Reuter (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 219–33.
48. Yorke, 'Representation of Early West Saxon History'; S. Irvine, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Idea of Rome in Alfredian Literature', in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter pp. 63–77; for the culmination of this imperial drive in the reign of Edgar, see J. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 283–307.
49. ASC 652; WM, *GRA*, 19.2, pp. 42–43. It should be noted that the *Wirtgernesburg* place-name does not appear in the ASC; William of Malmesbury uses that name to refer, by implication, to Bradford-on-Avon in his description of Cenwalh's battle against the Britons in 652.
50. See in particular L. Alcock, 'The Activities of Potentates in Celtic Britain AD 500–800: A Positivist Approach', in *Power and Politics in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland*, ed. S. T. Driscoll and M. R. Níeke (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 22–47; L. Alcock, *Kings and Warriors, Craftsmen and Priests in Northern Britain AD 550–850* (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 22–47; S. Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots* (London, 2004). The defended hillforts of northern Britain and Wales are of a remarkably consistent pattern throughout the Celtic areas of Britain and characterise a landscape dominated by warlike local potentates. Excavations at sites such as Dundurn, Dunadd, Burghead, Dinas Powys and South Cadbury have revealed construction or re-fortification involving ditches, fences and mortar defences from an early date (fourth to sixth centuries), and the full list of known fortified hill sites from Celtic regions is considerable.
51. Asser, ch. 54, p. 43, trans. S. D. Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 84.
52. A. L. Meaney, 'Woden in England: A Reconsideration of the Evidence', *Folklore* 77:2 (1966), pp. 105–15; References in OE poetry to the work of giants (*enta geweorc*) in relation to ancient buildings can be found in, for example, *The Ruin* (line 2), *The Wanderer* (line 85) and *Beowulf* (line 2717).
53. For this (relative) neologism, see C. A. Ward,

- 'New Verbs', *Notes and Queries: A Medium of Intercommunication for Literary Men, General Readers, etc.* 10 (1884), p. 135. For its late twentieth-century usage, due credit must be given to Dan Greaney for its appropriate use in 'Lisa the Iconoclast', *The Simpsons*, episode 3F13 (1996).
54. Robin Hood, for example, is supposed to have formed two hills in Herefordshire when he dropped two bags of soil he was carrying; similar tales are told of King Arthur, the Devil, and a range of local figures. See the entry for 'giants' in J. Simpson and S. Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore* (Oxford 2000), pp. 143–44, for a short summary and references.
 55. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 209–63 and R. Lavelle, 'The Politics of Rebellion: The Ætheling Æthelwold and West Saxon Royal Succession, 899–902', in *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, ed. P. Skinner (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 51–80; Abels, 'English Logistics and Military Administration'.
 56. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 209–63; see also B. Yorke, 'West Saxon Fortifications in the Ninth-Century: The Perspective from the Written Sources', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Baker, Brookes and Reynolds, pp. 91–109.
 57. ASC 860, trans. Swanton, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, p. 68.
 58. Asser, ch. 18, p. 17; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 73; ASC 860.
 59. See, for example, those at Reading (ASC 871), Exeter (ASC 876) and Thorney Island (ASC 893). Indeed, this has been identified as one of the unique aspects of Viking military strategy in the ninth century and a key factor in their early success in Britain; see G. Williams, 'Raiding and Warfare', in *The Viking World*, ed. S. Brink with N. Price (Oxford 2008), pp. 193–203, at pp. 198–99.
 60. Lavelle, 'Geographies of Power'. See further discussion below.
 61. Lavelle, 'Politics of Rebellion', considers this ASC entry in some detail – at least from the perspective of Æthelwold – and the treatment of it here has therefore been kept brief.
 62. Lavelle, 'Politics of Rebellion'.
 63. E. Guest, *Origines Celticae*, Vol. 2 (1883), pp. 186–93. Edwin Guest seems to have been the first modern scholar to suggest this; whilst his argument is eminently plausible, the location of the 'real' Badon Hill is still hotly disputed; see Marren, *Battles of the Dark Ages*, pp. 48–54.
 64. *De Excidio Britanniae*, ch. 26, in Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom (Chichester, 1978), pp. 28 and 98; Bede I.16.
 65. Bede I.16, pp. 52–54. The 'storm' (*tempestati*) referred to is the devastation of Britain by 'Angles, Saxons and Jutes'.
 66. S. M. Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica* (Woodbridge, 2011).
 67. J. Morris (ed.), *Nennius, British History and the Welsh Annals* (Chichester, 1980), pp. 1–8.
 68. Lavelle, in 'Politics of Rebellion', pp. 77–78, was reluctant to push this point. The likelihood that the story was known, however, coupled with a long tradition of aspirations to British overlordship and *Imperium*, make the suggestion highly plausible. See Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe*, pp. 283–307 and S. Keynes, 'Bretwalda or Brytenwalda', in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. M. Lapidge, J. Blair, S. Keynes and D. Scragg (Oxford, 1999), p. 74.
 69. Yorke, 'Representation of Early West Saxon History', citing events in 786, recorded in ASC 757.
 70. Cowardice in Anglo-Saxon military culture may have been seen as particularly shocking, and in this context Æthelwold's flight is surely emphasised to reflect the overawing effect of Edward's control of the Badbury encampment. On the role of cowardice in early medieval warfare see Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 266–68, and references therein.
 71. JW s.a. 1006, p. 458.
 72. S. Keynes, 'The Declining Reputation of King Æthelred the Unready', in *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed. D. Hill, BAR British Ser. 59 (1978), pp. 227–53. Compare this to the chronicler's insistent note that, in similar circumstances, King Edmund had already quit the town before it was besieged by Cnut in 1016 (ASC CDE 1016).
 73. *Beowulf*, in *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records. A Collective Edition, No. 4. Beowulf and Judith*, ed. E. van K. Dobbie (New York, 1953). The mere is memorably described by Hrothgar at lines 1356–75, and the conflict with Grendel's mother occurs at lines 1500–89; The fight with the dragon is given an extended treatment. The majority of the action occurs between lines 2547–3044. A. Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript* (Toronto 1995; rev. edn, 2003); H. Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry* (Cambridge, 1996).
 74. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, p. 251.
 75. *Judith*, in *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, No. 4*, ed. Dobbie, lines 200–20.

76. For the meaning of the place-name see Cavill, 'Place-Name Debate', who suggests convincingly that 'Brunna's Fort' (*i.e.* a fort belonging to a person called Brunna) is the most likely solution.
77. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'.
78. There is no archaeological evidence for the fortification of high status Anglo-Saxon sites during the pre-Viking period (with the possible exception, albeit some distance beyond Wessex, of Doon Hill (East Lothian), a single hall within a fenced enclosure, possibly associated with a monastery or Minster church; cf. Welch, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 49). The late sixth/early seventh century Northumbrian palace at Yeavering is unenclosed, without palisade or ditch, and was not likely to have been intended as a defensive stronghold (B. Hope-Taylor, *Yeavering: An Anglo-British Centre of Early Northumbria* [London, 1977]). In contrast to the unfortified halls at Yeavering, the high-status manorial sites of the late Anglo-Saxon period are typically robustly defended with ditches and palisades; see, for example, G. Beresford *et al.*, *Goltho: the Development of an Early Medieval Manor c.850–1150* (London, 1987) and, for the historical context, A. Williams, 'A Bell-house and a *Burb-geat*: Lordly Residences in England Before the Conquest', in *Medieval Knighthood IV*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 221–40.
79. See, for example, Semple, 'Locations of Assembly', and A. Pantos, 'The Location and Form of Anglo-Saxon Assembly-Places: Some Moot Points', in *Assembly Places and Practices*, ed. Pantos and Semple, pp. 155–180; also S. Semple, 'In the Open Air', in *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited*, ed. M. Carver, A. Sanmark and S. Semple (Oxford 2010), pp. 21–48, for the ritual significance of exterior spaces.
80. This is complicated somewhat by the problems alluded to above in disentangling settlement-names from topographical descriptions. 'Ford' names present particular problems. Bradford-on-Avon, for example, was the site of a Roman town, an Iron Age hillfort and an eighth-century monastic foundation of Aldhelm. The sequence of habitation is, however, less than clear. For the dating of the church of St. Lawrence, which is thought to include part of the early monastic church, see the monument's entry on the English Heritage *PastScape* website: <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=208138>.
81. Halsall, 'Anthropology and the Study of Pre-Conquest Warfare and Society', pp. 163–64.
82. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 26–29.
83. It should be acknowledged here that such an interpretation would challenge Halsall's model regarding the multi-scale nature of earlier Anglo-Saxon conflict by proposing that the ritual/ideological dimensions of conflict may actually have increased with the scale and gravitas of the fighting.
84. Halsall, 'Anthropology and the Study of Pre-Conquest Warfare and Society', pp. 165–67.
85. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'.
86. See for example *Wodnesbeorg* (ASC 592 and 715), *Hengestesdun* (ASC 838), *Cwicchelmes hlaew* (ASC CDE 1006); all three of these place-names utilise personal or theophoric elements that have a particular significance in West Saxon genealogies.
87. See, for example, observations about the battle of *Eðandun* (pp. 45–49). Other events and locations are treated in detail in other publications, *e.g.* Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare', and J. Baker, S. Brookes and T. J. T. Williams, 'The Battle of Penselwood (AD 1016) and the Landscape of Anglo-Saxon Warfare' (in preparation).
88. The few examples from across Britain – Englefield, Heavenfield, Wodensfield for example – have the hallmarks of Morgan's 'iconic' names and, in any case, carry special significance through the words with which they are compounded.
89. T. J. T. Williams, 'For the Sake of Bravado in the Wilderness: Confronting the Bestial in Anglo-Saxon Warfare', in *Representing Beasts in Early Medieval England and Scandinavia: New Readings*, ed. M. D. J. Bintley and T. J. T. Williams (Woodbridge, 2015).
90. *Beowulf*: lines 102–104, author's translation; note the presence of 'fastness' as one characteristic of the boundary world inhabited by the monster, perhaps this reflects a sense of the ancient stronghold out on the periphery of the inhabited landscape.
91. *Beowulf*, lines 2209–2854.
92. B. Colgrave (ed. and trans.), *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge, 1956), ch. 31, pp. 100–107.
93. B. Colgrave (ed. and trans.), *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1927), ch. 13, pp. 26–29.
94. ASC 592, 715; Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 272 (AD 825).
95. ASC?658, 878 (as the probable location of *Eggbryhtes stan* – a mustering point, rather than a battle), 1016 (a location in the Selwood forest that formed the boundary between Somerset and Wiltshire and, in earlier times, the boundary between West Saxon and British territory).
96. Also significant here is the frequency of ritual weapon deposition at fords; A. Reynolds and S.

- Simple, 'Anglo-Saxon Non-Funerary Weapon Depositions', in *Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology: Papers in Honour of Martin G. Welch*, ed. S. Brookes, S. Harrington and A. Reynolds, BAR British Ser. 527 (Oxford, 2011), pp. 40–48.
97. *ASC* 752, 851, and CDE 1006.
 98. See esp. S. J. Simple, 'A Fear of the Past: The Place of the Prehistoric Burial Mound in the Ideology of Middle and Later Anglo-Saxon England.' *World Archaeology* 30:1 (1998), pp. 109–26, but also A. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs* (Oxford, 2009) for the connection to judicial execution sites, an association that throws up interesting points of connection with the display of other types of royally sanctioned violence.
 99. For the most eloquent expression of this view of the Anglo-Saxon world-view, see J. R. R. Tolkien, 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics', in *The Monsters and the Critics & Other Essays*, ed. C. Tolkien (London 1997), pp. 5–48.
 100. See for example Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*; A. A. Lee, *Gold-Hall and Earth Dragon: Beowulf as Metaphor* (Toronto, 1988).
 101. Bosworth and Toller, *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, p. 660.
 102. These ideas are discussed at length in Williams, 'For the Sake of Bravado in the Wilderness'.
 103. N. Price, *The Viking Way: Religion and War in Late Iron Age Scandinavia* (Oxford, 2002).
 104. Gareth Williams, *pers. comm.* See also T. Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'. *Ine* clause 51, in *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, ed. F. L. Attenborough (Cambridge, 1925), pp. 40–41.
 105. G. Halsall, 'Playing by Whose Rules? A Further Look at Viking Atrocity in the Ninth Century', *Medieval History* 2:3 (1992), pp. 2–12.
 106. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 302 and 308–14.
 107. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 290.
 108. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 1507 and 765 respectively.
 109. O. S. Anderson, *The English Hundred-Names: The South-Western Counties*, Lunds Universitets Arsskrift, 35.5 (Lund, 1939), p. 152.
 110. The droveway is marked as such on the first edition O.S. map of Wiltshire in the vicinity of O.S. ST 908538. No trace of the meeting place survives, but the name seems to have applied to the hill in the vicinity of 'Crosswellsdown' farm where three separate parishes meet; *VCH: Wilts.* 8, pp. 193–97.
 111. Baker and Brookes, 'Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex', pp. 79–80.
 112. J. Baker, 'Warriors and Watchmen: Place-Names and Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence', *Medieval Archaeology* 55 (2011), pp. 258–67.
 113. Reynolds and Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age'.
 114. Anderson, *The English Hundred-Names*, p. 152.
 115. As, for example, in the landscape of the Kennet valley (an issue to be discussed in Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare').
 116. J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton (eds), *The Place-Names of Wiltshire*, English Place-Name Society 16 (Cambridge, 1939), p. 140.
 117. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*; Simple, 'Fear of the Past', and *Perceptions of the Prehistoric in Anglo-Saxon England: Religion, Ritual, and Rulership in the Landscape* (Oxford, 2013); H. Williams, *Death and Memory in Early Medieval Britain* (Cambridge, 2006).
 118. A. Meaney, *A Gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites* (London, 1964), p. 266.
 119. P. H. Robinson, 'The Excavations of Jeffery Whitaker at Bratton Camp', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine Bulletin* 25 (Spring 1979), pp. 11–13.
 120. G. K. Chesterton, *Alarms and Discursions* (London, 1911), pp. 197–98.
 121. Chesterton, *Alarms and Discursions*, p. 198; Marren, *Battles of the Dark Ages*, pp. 123–31.
 122. It is hard to imagine, for example, that the Viking army who arrived at *Cwicchelmeshlewe* in 1006 were unaware of the challenge they were making to ideas of West Saxon ancestry, authority and folklore (*ASC* CDE 1006); see H. Williams, *Death and Memory*, pp. 207–11; A. Sanmark and S. J. Simple, 'Places of Assembly: New Discoveries in Sweden and England', *Fornvännen* 103:4 (2008), pp. 245–59; Simple, *Perceptions of the Prehistoric*, pp. 96–100; Williams, 'Landscape and Warfare'.
 123. I am grateful for Ryan Lavelle for the invitation to speak at the conference which ultimately gave rise to this volume. I am grateful, too, to John Baker for his generous advice before, during, and after preparation of this paper. Gareth Williams, Andrew Reynolds, Stuart Brookes and Mike Bintley have all made valuable contributions to my thinking: both generally, and at specific points in the above pages. I must also thank Zee and my parents for their endless support and forbearance. The Arts and Humanities Research Council has contributed to making possible my research, a fragment of which is presented here. I am entirely to blame for any errors.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses¹

Derek Gore

This paper focuses on the western shires and examines the motives of the Scandinavian leaders who explored, landed, and led their armies and fleets in this area. It also looks at the responses of kings and officials to the threats posed by these activities. Its base is a commentary on and a review of the primary source material relating to the 'First Viking Age'. Its intention is also to extend and supplement the ideas in my earlier publications of 2001 and 2004.²

Early Viking Raids

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records, under the year 787 (for the corrected annal date of 789), the marriage of Beorhtric, king of Wessex to Eadburh, daughter of King Offa of Mercia. During his reign (786–802), a number of manuscripts of the *Chronicle*, A through to F, include an entry noting the landing of three ships of Northmen in England.³ The later *Annals of St Neots* records that they landed at Portland, Dorset.⁴ The king's official, named by Æthelweard as Beaduheard,⁵ rode to meet them to compel them to go to the king's *tun* (identified as Dorchester, Dorset, by Æthelweard), since he did not know what they were.⁶ Æthelweard adds that the reeve and his companions were killed by the newcomers. All versions of the *Chronicle* repeat that 'these were the first ships of the Danish men which sought out the land of the English race.' (*ƿæt wæron ƿa ærestan scipu deniscra monna ƿe Angelcynnes lond gesohton.*)

How do we interpret the scraps of information about this incident given to us by these sources? The principal event recorded in both the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the variant Latin texts is the royal marriage. We cannot assume that the landing at Portland was in the same year; rather, as the *Chronicle* makes clear, it was only at some point during Beorhtric's reign. All the sources agree that the arrivals were 'Vikings' from Scandinavia. David Dumville has argued that the later Northern Recension of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is the first to specify that these *Norðmanna* were from *Hereða lande*, that is Hörthaland in south-west Norway. He sees this as one of a number of later additions to the sparse record of the ninth century and casts doubt on its authenticity.⁷

Æthelweard tells us that when Beaduheard heard of the landing at Portland he 'leapt on his horse', and 'sped to the harbour with a few men', thus carrying out his duty to intercept strangers at the border of the kingdom and conduct them to the nearest royal centre, as suggested in Alfred's lawcode.⁸ Æthelweard suggests that Beaduheard thought the arrivals were traders. This is not impossible. Exchange of goods between Scandinavia and the Roman Empire continued into the early middle ages. Scandinavian amber, walrus ivory and furs are known in pre-Viking Age Europe⁹ and coins, glassware and pottery from the European kingdoms have been found in Scandinavia.¹⁰ Scandinavian traders were certainly familiar with the port of Dorestad near the mouth of the Rhine, although



4.1. Places in western England discussed in the text.

there is no certain evidence of direct trading contacts between Britain and Scandinavia. It is just possible, therefore, that these arrivals at Portland were genuine traders. Æthelweard implies that the reeve's high-handed treatment of the arrivals led to his death and that of his companions. The incomers may have taken fright at being ordered inland, presumably to Dorchester, some 12 miles (19 km) distant and away from their ships.

However, it is also worth placing the event at Portland in a wider context. The *Annals of Ulster* report the 'devastation of all the islands of Britain by heathens' in 794.¹¹ In the previous year heathen men (*hæðenra bergung*, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* has them) had raided the monastery on the island

of Lindisfarne off the Northumbrian coast, an event which Alcuin famously rendered in Biblical terms.¹² Alcuin, an important contemporary source, also referred to attacks in 799 on islands off the coast of Aquitaine.¹³ It is likely that these attacks were largely by Norwegian Vikings, who had begun to explore westwards into the Northern Isles of Scotland and from there had penetrated southwards. The *Annals of Ulster* do not report the arrival of Danish Vikings in Ireland until 851.¹⁴ Early Danish attacks on Francia were concentrated on Frisia,¹⁵ provoked at least in part by Charlemagne's land campaigns close to the Danish border and the internal politics of Denmark. However, the North Sea was, according to the *Royal Frankish Annals*, 'infested' with 'pirates'

as early as 800, causing Charlemagne to build a fleet and set guards.¹⁶ This may imply that merchants were experiencing attacks at sea, although specific raids on the Empire unreported in the sources are always a possibility.

Raiding to acquire wealth of all types to take back home seems the likeliest motive for the leaders of these earliest expeditions into western Europe. The Portland incident fits into a pattern of coastal exploration and attacks around the British Isles in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Ireland was targeted disproportionately, with only three attacks mentioned on the English kingdoms, six on western Scotland, but twenty-five on Ireland before 830.¹⁷ This pattern reinforces the view argued above that the earliest raiders were from Norway and, after making initial landfall in the Scottish Northern Isles, they explored southwards through the Irish and North Seas.¹⁸

The first recorded attack by Vikings in the South-West peninsula was in 836 at Carhampton in north Somerset.¹⁹ An estate at Carhampton was left by Alfred the Great in his will to his son Edward,²⁰ but it may already have been in royal hands for some time before that. Excavations at Carhampton Eastbury Farm between 1993 and 1995 showed a long history of primary iron production on the site, probably starting in the late Roman period and continuing through the early middle ages to at least the tenth century.²¹ Finds included sherds of B ware *amphorae* from the Mediterranean and one sherd of Frankish E ware. These were finds which place the *longue durée* significance of Carhampton in a context associated with other sites in the South-West. Mediterranean pottery has been recorded from other high status sites in Somerset such as South Cadbury and Cadbury Congresbury, as well as further west at Bantham Ham in Devon and Tintagel in Cornwall, where this pottery has been interpreted as indicative of high status secular occupation. Finds of E ware are rare in the South-West; Carhampton's is the first certain sherd from Somerset.²²

The excavators' interpretation of the site was that

Carhampton was a monastery associated with Saint Carantoc from the sixth century, but equally the evidence would allow the possibility of a British royal estate centre later taken over by the kings of the West Saxons.²³ The attack fits into a pattern of explorations and raids which targeted monasteries, coastal settlements and royal estates in England. This strip of fertile land on the north Somerset coast between Porlock and Watchet was attacked on a number of occasions in the ninth and tenth centuries. The Carhampton landing was clearly viewed as a serious enough threat to provoke a royal response. The attraction of the royal estate plus ease of landing were likely key factors in this attack.

But the incident raises a number of questions. Were the Viking leader and his fleet exploring the Bristol Channel by chance? Did he have prior knowledge of the Carhampton site and so deliberately targeted it? This hostile force appears to have stayed in the vicinity or at the estate long enough for King Egbert to bring an army against them. Were there other unreported raids on the western shires between the Portland landing and the Carhampton attack? No attacks are reported on the Welsh side of the Channel. Was the Carhampton incident just a chance offshoot from the activities around Ireland or did Viking leaders entertain specific aims against the West Saxons at this early stage in the Viking Age?

A British Context

It is worth examining the next reported Viking attack two years later in conjunction with the 836 episode. In 838 a Viking army combined with a Cornish force to fight against the West Saxons.²⁴ The background to this event is the expansionist policy pursued by Egbert, largely at the expense of the kingdom of Mercia, but also westwards against the British rulers of Dumnonia,²⁵ and it is this policy particularly which illuminates the events of 836 and 838. By the start of his reign, Devon was already firmly part of Wessex, though precisely when this occurred is in dispute. There

is enough evidence to confirm the existence of a British kingdom named Dumnonia in the South-West,²⁶ though the size and nature of the kingdom are impossible to know. We glimpse the earlier relationship between Dumnonia and Wessex especially in the writings of Aldhelm.²⁷ In particular his letter to Gerontius, king of Dumnonia, written before c.705, stresses the differences between the 'correct' Roman practices of the West Saxon from those of the Dumnonian Church. Barbara Yorke and Martin Grimmer describe the respectful yet firm tone of the letter and interpret it as a veiled threat to annexe the churches and land of Dumnonia.²⁸ In 710, after Aldhelm's death in the previous year, King Ine of Wessex and Nunna, his relative, fought against Gerontius.²⁹ The West Saxon king and his church seem to have been pursuing a single goal. Subsequently, during the eighth century, the western part of Dumnonia was absorbed into Wessex. Egbert's hostile relations with the Britons of Cornwall before 838 began, as far as we know, in 815 when he raided in Cornwall from east to west.³⁰ Ten years later, in 825, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* recorded a battle between the Britons and the Devon-men in west Devon.³¹

The battle at Hingston Down in 838 should be seen therefore as one of a number of hostile encounters between the West Saxons and the Britons of Cornwall. It is fair to assume that the leaders of the Britons took the initiative and made contact with the Scandinavians. They were facing a powerful enemy and a Viking war-band, despite their pagan beliefs, must have seemed the likeliest mercenary force able to offer resistance to the West Saxons. Guy Halsall comments that this was the first occasion on which a Christian ruler used pagan mercenaries to fight against a Christian realm.³² Conceivably, it may have been the force from Carhampton. How the Cornish communicated with them we cannot know and we can only speculate on the rewards the allies were promised for their help. Viking leaders were quick to take advantage of internal conflicts and turn them to their own advantage, for example at York in 866–7,

when the Northumbrian throne was in dispute, and after the death of the Frankish emperor Louis the Pious in 840, when his sons fought over the division of the empire.³³ The little we know of the events of 838 has the appearance of Viking leaders exploiting a situation for their own ends.

The 'Great Viking Army' and West Saxon Responses

The greatest threat to the English kingdoms came with the arrival of what the *Chronicle* calls for the first time *se micel here* – 'the great army' – into East Anglia in 865.³⁴ This army, subsequently reinforced with additional war-bands, achieved the conquest of the kingdoms of Northumbria (867), East Anglia (869) and Mercia (873) before returning to Wessex, joined by a new army probably led by three named leaders Guthrum, Oscetel and Anwend.³⁵ At the end of 871, Alfred resorted to buying off the Viking leaders to deter attacks, a practice common both in Francia and in England.³⁶ The political objectives of Scandinavian leaders are clear. They aimed to control all the English kingdoms either by direct rule by one of their own leaders or by indirect rule through puppet kings.

In 875, Guthrum's army, which had overwintered in Cambridge, targeted Wessex by marching across Alfred's kingdom to Wareham (Dors.).³⁷ At the same time it may be inferred from the subsequent year's entry in the *Chronicle* that a Viking fleet moved round the coast into Poole Harbour, linked by the River Frome to Wareham. Wareham almost certainly had earthwork defences by this time, which would have been a major attraction for the Vikings. The places seized by elements of Viking forces during their campaigns were either fortified (e.g. York, Exeter, Gloucester and Nottingham) or had natural defences (e.g. the islands of Torksey, Thanet and Sheppey). Only on very rare occasions do we see Vikings constructing defences such as between the Rivers Thames and Kennet near Reading (Berks.) in 870–1 and at Repton (Derbys.) in 873–4.³⁸ Asser does describe Wareham as a

castellum, implying that it was fortified,³⁹ although this could relate to its defences at the time when he was writing, in the 890s rather than in 875–6.

King Alfred has been seen as a constructor of forts or *burhs* largely on the evidence of the early tenth-century document known as the *Burghal Hidage*, which lists forts forming part of a defensive network across Wessex with the number of hides of land attached to each.⁴⁰ Asser also portrays Alfred rebuilding and constructing anew cities and towns ('And what of the cities and towns to be rebuilt and of others to be constructed where previously there were none?' [*De civitatibus et urbibus renovandis et aliis, ubi nunquam ante fuerant, construendis?*]),⁴¹ but, as Nicholas Brooks showed, the ability to build and repair *burhs* was available to West Saxon kings before Alfred's reign.⁴² Provision of labour to construct forts was one of the common burdens attached to charters as early as the reign of Beorhtric (786–802), although this was not a regular feature of West Saxon charters until the reign of Æthelbald (855–60). However, it was certainly a burden attached to Mercian charters of the eighth century, as Brooks showed in 1971,⁴³ and it may be significant that, as we have seen, Beorhtric was married to a Mercian princess, Eadburh, who was perhaps, as Barbara Yorke has argued, 'an active representative of Mercian power in Wessex.'⁴⁴

There are good reasons too why Wareham might have been chosen for fortification earlier in the ninth century. The site was accessible by sea and river and may have been a port. King Beorhtric was buried there,⁴⁵ so it was most probably a royal estate as well as an early ecclesiastical centre with a small but significant group of early inscribed stones.⁴⁶ Taken together, these elements demonstrate that Wareham was a key place which may already have had defences by 875. The surviving earthworks are rectangular in form with well-preserved rampart and ditch on the west, east and north sides of the later medieval town. Excavation has shown that the 'West Walls' had two major phases, in the earlier of which was found residual Roman pottery with small amounts of possible Iron

Age and middle Saxon sherds.⁴⁷ The excavators believed that this primary rampart was Alfredian.⁴⁸ However, excavations in the interior of the town in 1974–5 showed population growth in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and there were few signs of occupation earlier than this.⁴⁹

King Alfred brought an army to Wareham, since Æthelweard remarks that the Viking army was 'encamped in the same position as the West-Saxon army, a thing which they had not previously done, near the town called Wareham' (*coniecit statum communem cum occidentali exercitu, quod ante non usi sunt, iusta oppidum quod Vuerham nuncupatur*).⁵⁰ Alfred concluded a peace with the Viking leaders, the terms of which again included payment by the king and exchange of high-ranking hostages.⁵¹ The Vikings also swore oaths on a ring sacred to them that they would leave Alfred's kingdom. Hilda Ellis Davidson suggests that the ring was sacred to the god Thor and may have been an arm-ring, following Æthelweard's description of it as *armilla sacra*.⁵² Asser, in translating the *Chronicle*, changed the ring into holy Christian relics, which would have rendered the oath meaningless for the pagan leaders.⁵³ And, in spite of the oath, the army stole away at night and, using horses, made for Exeter. At the same time the fleet from Poole Harbour sailed along the coast to the River Exe, but off Swanage (Dors.), the *Chronicle* reports a 'storm' (*yst*: ABE) or 'mist' (*myst*: CD) which caused the loss of 120 ships. This was a disaster, which must have severely weakened the fleet and hampered the mobility of the Viking force. Even if we doubt the precise number of ships given, it must surely indicate that the Chronicler understood that a considerable proportion of the fleet and men were lost.

Roman Exeter had been a walled town. Two-thirds of its wall stands today, although much altered and added to in subsequent centuries. It was certainly a large enceinte, with a wall over two kilometres long enclosing an area of 37 hectares (94 acres). Yet Wareham's defences also enclosed an area of some 32–6 hectares⁵⁴ and the enemy held it successfully against Alfred's army. If the Viking

ships penetrated up river as far as Exeter, as a Viking fleet may have done in 1001,⁵⁵ perhaps their crews and conceivably even the ships themselves were brought within Exeter's walls. On the other hand, it is also possible that the leaders decided only to defend one part of the interior – perhaps the highest point in the north-eastern half – although no trace of any internal defences of this period, which would have been required, has been uncovered. Another possibility is that the Vikings seized and fortified the monastery, which had been in existence since about 680 and which lies below the present cathedral green.⁵⁶ The use of monasteries and ecclesiastical buildings by Viking armies for overwintering bases, but sometimes for longer periods, is well attested. Examples include Repton (Derbys.), 873–4, Kilmainham, near Dublin, after 841, and the island monastery of Noirmoutier (dép. Vendée), close to the mouth of the River Loire, after 835.⁵⁷

The choice of Exeter is interesting. Apart from the advantages already mentioned both for the army and the fleet, what influenced the leaders' choice of site? Was there some hope that there would be a measure of support for them from British elements in the population of the peninsula? Was co-ordination of action with a second Viking army, then active in Dyfed in south-west Wales, already envisaged? King Alfred 'rode after the mounted raiding-army with the army as far as Exeter', and they 'could not overtake them before they were in the fortress where they could not be got at' (*hie hindan ofridan ne meahte ær hie on þam fastene wæron, þær him mon to ne meahte*).⁵⁸ The implication is that Alfred was not prepared to attack the Exeter defences, but preferred to keep his forces outside and negotiate. Given that the *Chronicle* records it, the king would have been aware of the fate of the two Northumbrian kings who were killed in an attack on a Viking force inside York's defences in 867.⁵⁹ The advantage, however, was with the West Saxons, since their army could easily be provisioned, whereas the intruders were in a hostile land with whatever supplies they were able to gather before Alfred's army arrived.⁶⁰

Once again, negotiations to reach a solution began. The Vikings handed over to Alfred hostages as surety and swore oaths to keep the peace, to which the *Chronicle* says they adhered.⁶¹ Significantly, it was harvest-time in August 877,⁶² before the Viking force left Exeter for Mercia. This meant that the harvest would be in store by the time they reached their chosen destination. Feeding their men was a major preoccupation for Viking leaders, as we shall see again. Finally, Alfred had persuaded them to leave his kingdom, but the initiative remained largely with his enemies.

Guthrum's army in fact settled for the winter of 877–8 in Gloucester, a Roman walled town, only some 30 miles (48 km) beyond the West Saxon northern boundary.⁶³ Again this was a careful choice of site by the Viking leaders, providing protection both for the army and for their fleet. The site gave them the chance to re-organise the kingdom of Mercia to their liking, to monitor events in Wessex and to feed their troops. The perseverance and determination that Alfred had shown in pursuing the Viking force had eventually caused them to leave, but, in view of future events, the Viking leaders had not abandoned their aim of conquering the last independent English kingdom.

In midwinter, after twelfth night (6 January), the Viking army moved to Chippenham, Wiltshire, noted by Asser as a royal estate.⁶⁴ It seems likely that Alfred and his family were spending Christmas at Chippenham and were forced to flee, since Alfred next appears in the same entry in the *Chronicle* 'with a small troop' (*lytle werede*), travelling with difficulty 'through woods and into swamp-fastnesses' (*æfter wudum for, 7 on morfastenum*), which Asser locates in Somerset. It is logical that Alfred was driven to these straits because he was caught unawares by the Vikings at Chippenham. Had he been spending Christmas elsewhere in his kingdom he would hardly have been reduced to this position. The decision to stay at Chippenham, possibly a fortified site,⁶⁵ is logical, given that Alfred must have known by then that the enemy was only just beyond the north-west border of his kingdom

at Gloucester. The Viking army must also have been aware of Alfred's movements. Scandinavian leaders were adept at gathering intelligence about their enemies.⁶⁶

The sudden move from Gloucester to Chippenham in early January was effective, if unusual. Armies in early medieval Europe rarely undertook operations outside the fighting season from March to October. Kings had difficulties mustering troops and it was usual also for Viking armies to stay in their strongholds in the winter.⁶⁷ Apart from the difficulties inherent in travelling during the winter months, there would have been problems obtaining food supplies. Indeed Guthrum's army, having secured Chippenham, a royal estate centre, then spent the rest of the winter there, according to Asser, suggesting that food stored at the site was one consideration.⁶⁸

Asser tells us that in the same winter of 877–8, a Viking force which had been raiding in Wales sailed across the Bristol Channel to Devon in twenty-three ships.⁶⁹ Its leader, named in later sources as Ubbe or Ubba, is described as a brother of Ívarr and Halfdan mentioned by Æthelweard as leaders of the *micel here*.⁷⁰ This winter landing has the appearance of an attack co-ordinated with the Gloucester Vikings, so perhaps Alfred was by then in the Somerset Levels or at least had fled from Chippenham. Æthelweard also tells us that ealdorman Odda of Devon led the West Saxon force opposing the Vikings, but Asser mentions only king's thegns (*ministri regis*) with their followers.⁷¹ All were apparently within a stronghold (*arx*) named *Cynuit*. The Vikings began a siege, believing that hunger and thirst would make the besieged submit. A battle took place outside the fort when the West Saxons fell on the enemy camp at dawn and overwhelmed them. Asser's description of the site, which he claims to have visited, suggests that it was not newly constructed, but was re-used and is perhaps best interpreted, as Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge suggest, as an earlier hillfort⁷²

The *Burghal Hidage* lists a small number of hillforts which were reused as *burhs* in the ninth

century. In Devon, these include Halwell and possibly Pilton near Barnstaple.⁷³ In the fifth and sixth centuries hillforts were reoccupied or built as high status centres in western Britain and Wales. In Somerset, for example, this has been demonstrated by excavation at South Cadbury, at Cadbury-Congresbury, and suggested by Ian Burrow for a number of other sites.⁷⁴ In Devon, only High Peak near Sidmouth has yielded definite evidence of re-use, or possibly construction, in this period, but in Cornwall, Chun Castle and Tintagel were occupied.⁷⁵ There is, therefore, a history of use of hilltop defended places, which provides a general background to the events of 878. More specifically, Jeremy Haslam has suggested the use of temporary forts as possible look-out stations before Alfred's reign, in a system which included routeways.⁷⁶ But why the West Saxon forces with the Devon ealdorman and other leaders were inside a fortification in north Devon is very difficult to answer. Were they acting as coast-guards? If so, how long had they been stationed in the area? Were they aware of the activities of 'Ubbe's' army in Wales across the Bristol Channel? Did they have prior knowledge of a possible hostile landing? Were these men the retainers of nobles with estates in that part of north Devon? Such questions cannot be answered with any certainty, but they do at least open up possible intriguing lines of debate.

The identification of the site of *Arx Cynuit* has exercised antiquarians and scholars for more than four centuries. As we have seen, Asser gives topographical clues as well as supplying the name. Kenwith Castle, Bideford, Wind Hill, Countisbury above Lynmouth and more recently Castle Hill, Great Torrington have all been advanced.⁷⁷ The estates of the leaders at *Cynuit* would presumably have been in the richer farmlands to the west or east of Exmoor. Had local thegns 'shut themselves up for safety' (*se concluderant confugii causa*), as Asser describes, in a stronghold belonging to one of their number?⁷⁸ There are certainly plenty of suitable landing places for the Viking fleet on the south side of the Bristol Channel, including the

estuaries of the Rivers Torridge and Taw, the beach at Woolacombe, or the bays at Ilfracombe, Porlock or Minehead.

This brings into question 'Ubbe's' motives in sailing from Dyfed to the South-West peninsula in winter.⁷⁹ There are two possibilities. It looks most likely that the Gloucester and Dyfed armies were acting in concert. 'Ubbe' might therefore have been creating a diversion by raiding the area, as part of an overall plan. If the two armies were acting in concert then perhaps they hoped to trap Alfred between them in what might be termed today a pincer movement. If the latter, favoured by Alfred Smyth,⁸⁰ perhaps at the time of Alfred's flight from Chippenham or just after, then surely a landing further east, perhaps even as far as the mouth of the Parret would have served 'Ubbe's' purpose better. Why march or ride across the fringes of Exmoor when their ships could more easily take them closer to the Somerset Levels to trap Alfred between the two armies? The battle might have resulted after a landing somewhere on the north Devon or Somerset coast if 'Ubbe' heard of a strong opposing force in the vicinity, but this hardly fits the picture of a West Saxon army seeking refuge from the enemy.

Asser, enlarging upon the *Chronicle's* account, paints a picture of Alfred in Somerset with a small band of nobles, thegns and soldiers moving between 'woody and marshy places', raiding for food from both the Vikings and from 'Christians who had submitted to the Vikings' authority'. He claims that some of Alfred's subjects fled overseas, while others submitted to the Vikings.⁸¹ This scenario would see many of the West Saxon nobles and much of the population ignorant of what had happened to the king and perhaps fearful that he was dead. Asser was writing in the 890s, knowing that within a few weeks of the events to which he referred Alfred was to win a famous and complete victory over Guthrum's army. Did he exaggerate the king's plight in order to make his eventual victory more glorious?⁸² From Athelney, Alfred was able to order an army to gather in or near Selwood at a

particular date and moreover for those levies with their leaders to duly arrive which suggests that Guthrum and the other Viking leaders controlled much less of the kingdom than the sources imply.

The West Saxon army moved to Edington (Wilts.), a royal estate, a few miles to the north-east. Here Alfred gained a complete and decisive victory over the Vikings.⁸³ The *Chronicle* describes the remnants of the Viking army being pursued by mounted forces as far as the fortification, presumably Chippenham, outside the gates of which Alfred's forces then camped before the Vikings surrendered.⁸⁴ Asser claims that Alfred seized everything outside the fort – men, who were killed immediately, and animals – before the Vikings surrendered because of hunger, cold and fear (*fame, frigore, timore*). By May, the Vikings would not have been able to replenish their food stocks. Alfred was to take as many *foregislas* as he wanted to ensure peace and give none in return.⁸⁵ Asser stresses that this arrangement was unprecedented, which implies that the agreements at Wareham in 876 and at Exeter in 877 did involve an exchange of hostages.⁸⁶

Making Peace and Facing New Threats

In addition Guthrum promised to convert to Christianity, a condition previously imposed on pagan Vikings in Francia by both the emperor Louis the Pious and, only five years before 878, by King Charles the Bald of West Francia.⁸⁷ The names of Viking leaders were by now known to contemporary writers implying different forms of contact which may have included Christianity. Acceptance of a new religion from a ruler placed an obligation on the converted akin to recognition of overlordship,⁸⁸ so Guthrum and other leaders of the Viking army were making a considerable commitment. Alfred stood sponsor to Guthrum at his baptism and received him as his adoptive son in the name of Æthelstan.⁸⁹ Later, as ruler in East Anglia, Guthrum issued coins in his baptismal name.⁹⁰

Two years after Guthrum's death in 890, Wessex was attacked by Danish forces previously active in Francia and they were joined from 893 by seaborne Vikings from Northumbria and East Anglia.⁹¹ The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reports a fleet of a hundred ships sailing south around the coast and besieging Exeter. A fleet of forty ships, according to the A version of the *Chronicle*, then sailed north, that is around Land's End and into the Bristol Channel,⁹² and besieged a fortress on the north coast of Devon, possibly Pilton/ Barnstaple.⁹³ When Alfred brought an army to Exeter the Vikings there returned to their ships and left. We do not know whether the siege in the north succeeded or not. However, if the *Burghal Hidage* document does reflect Alfred's work he had by now revived existing forts and initiated the construction of new *burhs* in Wessex, using the hidage system to provide garrisons. There was a pattern of *burhs* in the western shires, with the notable exception of Cornwall, which prevented the seizure of significant strongpoints by the enemy and hindered their activities.

Æthelweard mentions a pirate called Sigeferth with a great fleet from Northumbria, who 'ravaged twice along the coast in that one expedition.'⁹⁴ This sounds like a reference to the two attacks on Devon mentioned above, which might indicate that the whole fleet was led by Sigeferth. Smyth suggests that the attacks were designed to separate western Wessex from the rest of the kingdom or to draw Alfred away towards the west while other Viking forces overran Kent and Essex.⁹⁵ He compares the situation to that of 878, when Guthrum and 'Ubbe's' armies attempted to trap Alfred. The ship-army which had besieged Exeter ravaged an area of Sussex close to Chichester on its way home in 894 before being beaten back,⁹⁶ but in 893 Sigeferth possibly took the fleet from north Devon to attack Dublin.⁹⁷ He may also have had designs on the kingship of Dublin, since the *Annals of Ulster* describe the Norse of Dublin divided in support of their current king, Sihtric, son of Ívarr and 'Jarl Sichfrith' (*i.e.* Sigeferth).⁹⁸ However, Sigeferth eventually returned to Northumbria and may be

the same Sigeferth whose name appears on coins minted at York.⁹⁹

Edward the Elder and Irish Sea Vikings

In the reign of Edward, Alfred's son, a Viking ship-army from Brittany was active in the Bristol Channel. In 914 a fleet led by Ohtor and Hroald came from the south, from Brittany, into the mouth of the River Severn.¹⁰⁰ This was probably the army which had devastated the monastery of St. Guenolé at Landévennec, Brittany, in 913.¹⁰¹ This force raided the Welsh coast and up the Wye valley where a bishop named Cyfeiliog (*Cameleac* in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*) was captured in Archenfield, west of Hereford. The king paid a ransom of 40 pounds, an enormous sum, to free Cyfeiliog, perhaps a gesture to reinforce his overlordship of the Welsh kingdoms. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reports the submission of three Welsh kings 'and all the race of the Welsh' to Edward at Tamworth in 918.¹⁰² As the Frankish examples of the seizures of Abbot Louis of St Denis and his brother in 858 demonstrate, ransoming high status captives was quite common.¹⁰³ However, local forces from Gloucester and Hereford engaged the Vikings, until they agreed to give hostages and promised to leave Edward's lands. The Viking force retreated to Steepholm and/or Flatholme, islets close together in the Bristol Channel.¹⁰⁴

At this point, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives a tantalising glimpse of the arrangements made by Edward to protect the south coast of the Bristol Channel from raiders, that is from Cornwall in the west as far east as Avonmouth (Bristol) (*westan from Wealum, east oþ Afene muþan*). The king had arranged positions and/or men were stationed along this stretch of coast, to deter the Vikings from landing (*se cyng hæfde funden þæt him mon sæt wiþ on suphealfæ Sæfernmuþan*). The Old English text is ambiguous.¹⁰⁵ *Man sæt* could mean that they were occupied, encamped or installed or that they lay in wait.¹⁰⁶ However, Edward's policy does echo a similar arrangement followed by Charlemagne a

hundred years previously for forts and coastguards on the Frankish coast. Einhard, in his *Life of Charlemagne*, says 'fortifications and guards were set up at all the ports and at the mouth of every river that seemed large enough to accommodate ships. He stopped the enemy from being able to come and go [freely].'¹⁰⁷ Edward's policy presumably involved stationing men at likely landing places along the coast too, reminiscent perhaps of the soldiers inside the fort of *Cynuit* in 878. Were old forts re-used once more to defend the coast against attacks? John Baker suggests that local strongholds were needed to supplement the major *burhs* and would have required a complex system of signalling and communications. He identifies one possible system near Colyton in East Devon.¹⁰⁸ The arrangement on the north coast does seem to have worked as the Vikings only attempted to force their way inland at night, probably in search of food. On two occasions, Vikings were driven off east of Watchet and at Porlock, on the north Somerset coast. Both times they lost men, and the remnants had to swim out to their ships. On their island bases they were short of food and many died of hunger, so they moved briefly to Dyfed in south-west Wales and then on to Ireland in the autumn.¹⁰⁹

Edward's arrangement on the Bristol Channel coast appears to be part of a wider policy of protecting the kingdom's boundaries, a consideration underlying Alfred's bequest of estates to his two sons.¹¹⁰ One charter records Edward's acquisition of the minster at Plympton, Devon, from Asser, bishop of Sherborne by exchanging it for lands at Wellington, West Buckland, and Bishop's Lydeard in Somerset.¹¹¹ Edward may here have had in mind defence of the valley of the River Plym, a navigable route inland via Plymouth Sound. Jeremy Haslam has suggested the construction of an Edwardian *burh* at Plympton.¹¹² Robin Fleming writes that 'by 1066 this [Plympton] and fourteen other royal and comital manors were concentrated along twenty five miles of coast from the Cornish bank of the Tamar to the Dart.' By controlling these manors

the rivers of the South Hams could be closed off to invaders.¹¹³ An arrangement with the religious community at Cheddar, whereby it acquired Banwell (Som.) and other lands in exchange for giving land at Carhampton to Edward, may be another example, recorded in a charter of King Edgar and involving a complicated arrangement with the Old Minster at Winchester.¹¹⁴ In a similar manner, in Hampshire, Edward exchanged an estate at Bishops Waltham in 904, to acquire land at Portchester from the bishop of Winchester.¹¹⁵ The king's aim, at least in the West Saxon heartlands, seems to have been to acquire estates in areas vulnerable to seaborne attacks.

Concluding Remarks

As with any army fighting in hostile territory, an important preoccupation for Viking leaders was feeding their men. Seizure of wealth and the forcing of direct payments from their enemies were also Scandinavian tactics throughout this period. Viking leaders also developed political aspirations, witnessed perhaps as early as 838 and culminating in Swein and Cnut's accessions in the early eleventh century. But West Saxon kings were active in opposing them too, leading their armies, negotiating, and constructing and garrisoning fortifications to keep their people safe and to deny the use of key sites to the enemy. As the names of enemy leaders became known to them, negotiations and exchange of hostages became easier, and Alfred copied Frankish practice in using Christian conversion to reinforce peace. Defence of the kingdom's boundaries and, in particular, its coastline were important considerations too and Wessex kings could be ruthless in pursuit of their goals. Just as kings reacted to events and developed longer-term policies, they inspired royal officials, ecclesiastics and nobles to help in the fight against the Scandinavians. The West Saxons did not always win, but, with some exceptions, local leaders repeatedly rose to the challenge.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Ryan Lavelle for his very generous advice and assistance with this paper.
2. D. A. Gore, *The Vikings and Devon* (Exeter, 2001); 'Britons, Saxons and Vikings in the South West', in *Scandinavia and Europe 800–1350: Contact, Conflict, and Coexistence*, ed. J. Adams and K. Holman (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 35–42.
3. ASC ABCDEF 789.
4. D. N. Dumville and M. Lapidge (eds), *The Annals of St Neots with Vita Prima Sancti Neoti*, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition 17 (Cambridge, 1985), p. 39.
5. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 27.
6. This information is in all versions of the ASC. Translations from the ASC in this chapter are from M. Swanton (ed. and trans.) *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (London, 1996).
7. D. N. Dumville, 'Vikings in Insular Chronicling', in *The Viking World*, ed. S. Brink with N. Price (London, 2008), pp. 350–67, at p. 356.
8. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 27; Alfred's Laws, ch. 34, trans. S. Keynes, M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of Alfred and other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 167.
9. J. W. Huggett, 'Imported Grave Goods and the Early Anglo-Saxon Economy', *Medieval Archaeology* 32 (1988), pp. 63–96, at pp. 64–65 and 68–69; J. Hines, 'The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England: an Update', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo: The Seventh Century in North-western Europe*, ed. M. Carver (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 315–29, at pp. 323–24; *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, trans. C. C. Mierow (Princeton, NJ, 1915), p. 56; see J. Hines, *The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England in the Pre-Viking Period*, BAR British Ser. 124 (Oxford, 1984), p. 278, quoting Jordanes, III.21.
10. E.g. M. Bencard, L. B. Jørgensen and H. B. Madsen, *Ribe Excavations 1970–76*, Volume 4 (Esbjerg, 1990), p. 147.
11. S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill (eds), *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)* (Dublin, 1983), s.a. 794, pp. 250–51.
12. ASC EF 793. Letter of Alcuin to Æthelred, king of Northumbria, trans. in *EHD* I, no. 194, pp. 842–44.
13. '[T]ruly, pagan ships, as you have heard, did much harm throughout the islands of the ocean in the regions of Aquitaine' (*[P]laganae vero naves, ut audistis, multa mala fecerunt per insulas oceani partibus Aquitaniae*). Alcuin, *Letters* no. 184, in *Epistolae Karolini aevi II*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH Epistolarum 4 (Berlin, 1895; repr. 1974)], p. 309.
14. C. Etchingham, 'Fair Foreigners' and 'Dark Foreigners': the Identity and Provenance of Vikings in Ninth-Century Ireland', in *The Viking Age: Ireland and the West*, ed. J. Sheehan and D. Ó Corráin (Dublin, 2010), pp. 80–88, esp. pp. 84–86.
15. E.g. RFA, s.a. 810.
16. '[I]n ipso mari quod tunc pirates infestum erat'. RFA, s.a. 800. Charlemagne's biographer, Einhard, mentions in general terms Northmen constantly ravaging the coasts of Gaul and Germany: Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum 25 (Hannover, 1911), ch. 17, p. 21; trans. P. E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier: The Complete Einhard* (Ontario, 1998), p. 27.
17. D. Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1981), map 49, p. 37.
18. J. Graham-Campbell, 'The Irish Sea Vikings: Raiders and Settlers', in *The Middle Ages in the North-West*, ed. T. Scott and P. Starkey (Oxford, 1995), pp. 59–83, at p. 63; D. Griffiths, *Vikings of the Irish Sea: Conflict and Assimilation AD 790–1050* (Stroud, 2010), p. 27.
19. ASC 836.
20. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1507, in S. Miller (ed.) *Charters of the New Minster, Winchester* (Oxford, 2001), p. 4; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 175, with discussion at p. 317, n. 21.
21. C. Hollinrake and N. Hollinrake, *Carhampton Eastbury Farm: Archaeological Works 1993–1995* (unpublished report for Somerset County Council, 1998), p. 85.
22. Much more common on ecclesiastical and royal sites in Ireland: see E. Campbell, *Continental and Mediterranean Imports to Atlantic Britain and Ireland AD 400–800*, CBA Research Report 157 (York, 2007), p. 46, fig. 34.
23. Campbell, *Continental and Mediterranean Imports*, p. 8, but see S. Pearce, *South-Western Britain in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 2004), p. 240, n. 135.
24. ASC 838.
25. B. Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 94–5.
26. E.g. Gildas, *De Excidio Britonum*, ch. 28, section 1, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom, *Gildas: The Ruin of Britain and Other Works* (London, 1978), p. 29.
27. *Aldhelm: The Prose Works*, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge and M. Herren (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 140–3 and 155–60; *Aldhelm: The Poetic Works*, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge and J. L. Rosier (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 177–79. See also Martin Grimmer's discussion of the relations between Aldhelm and Geraint of

- Dumnonia in 'Saxon Bishop and Celtic King: Interactions between Aldhelm of Wessex and Geraint of Dumnonia', *The Heroic Age* 4 (2001) <www.mun.ca/mst/heroicage/issues/4/Grimmer.html>.
28. Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 179; Grimmer, 'Saxon Bishop and Celtic King'.
 29. *ASC* ADE 710.
 30. *ASC* 815.
 31. *ASC* 825; also recorded in Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 272 and 273.
 32. G. Halsall, *Warfare and Society in the Barbarian West, 450–900* (London, 2003), p. 108.
 33. *ASC* 867; *AB* s.a. 840–43.
 34. *ASC* 865.
 35. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 243, n. 73.
 36. See J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), p. 153; R. Abels, 'Paying the Danegeld: Anglo-Saxon Peacemaking with Vikings', in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, ed. P. de Souza and J. France (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 173–92.
 37. *ASC* 875. For a discussion of finds of Scandinavian metalwork near Wareham see J. Kershaw, 'Scandinavian-style Metalwork from Southern England: New Light on the "First Viking Age" in Wessex', below, pp. 97–98.
 38. On Reading, see Asser, ch. 35, pp. 26–27; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 78; on Repton see *ASC* 874 and M. Biddle and B. Kjolbye-Biddle, 'Repton and the "Great Heathen Army"', 873–4', in *Vikings and the Danelaw: Select Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress, Nottingham and York, 21–30 August 1997*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell, R. Hall, J. Jesch and D. N. Parsons (Oxford, 2001), pp. 45–96, at pp. 59–60.
 39. Asser, ch. 49, p. 36; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 82, with notes at p. 245, n. 87.
 40. A. R. Rumble, 'The *Burghal Hidage* as a Document', in *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications*, ed. D. Hill and A. R. Rumble (Manchester, 1996), pp. 69–87, esp. p. 69.
 41. Asser, ch. 91, p. 77; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 101.
 42. N. P. Brooks, 'The Administrative Background to the *Burghal Hidage*', in *The Defence of Wessex*, ed. Hill and Rumble, pp. 128–50, at p. 129, developed further by him in 'Alfredian Government: the West Saxon Inheritance', in *Alfred the Great Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. T. Reuter (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 153–73. See also J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex: Towards a Reassessment of Anglo-Saxon Strategic Landscapes', below, pp. 70–86.
 43. N. P. Brooks, 'The Development of Military Obligations in Eighth and Ninth Century England', in *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 69–84, at p. 76.
 44. B. Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1990), p. 114; see also P. Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex 800–1066', *Past and Present* 91 (1981), pp. 3–27, at p. 4.
 45. *ASC* ACDE 786.
 46. J. Higgitt, 'Wareham', in *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Volume VII: South-West England*, ed. R. Cramp (Oxford, 2006), pp. 65 and 118–24.
 47. Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England [RCHME], 'Wareham West Walls', *Medieval Archaeology* 3 (1959), pp. 120–38, at p. 126.
 48. RCHME, 'Wareham West Walls', p. 137.
 49. D. A. Hinton and R. Hodges, 'Excavations in Wareham 1974–5', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* 99 (1980 for 1977), pp. 42–83, at p. 82.
 50. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 41.
 51. *ASC* BCDE 876.
 52. H. R. Ellis Davidson, *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* (Harmondsworth, 1964), pp. 76–77; Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 41.
 53. See discussion in Abels, 'Paying the Danegeld' for payments and, for oath-taking: *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998), p. 149; Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 245–46, n. 90.
 54. D. Hill, 'Appendix IV: Gazetteer of *Burghal Hidage* Sites', in *Defence of Wessex*, ed. Hill and Rumble, pp. 189–231, at p. 221.
 55. *ASC* A 1001 and CDE 1001. See discussion in R. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 254–55.
 56. F. Barlow, 'The English Background', in *The Greatest Englishman: Essays on St. Boniface and the Church at Crediton*, ed. T. Reuter (Exeter, 1980), pp. 11–29, at p. 19.
 57. *ASC* 874, discussed in Biddle and Kjolbye-Biddle, 'Repton and the "Great Heathen Army"'; E. O'Brien, 'The Location and Context of Viking Burials at Kilmainham and Islandbridge, Dublin', in *Ireland and Scandinavia in the Early Viking Age*, ed. H. B. Clarke, M. Ní Mhaonaigh and R. Ó Floinn (Dublin, 1998), pp. 203–21; L. Simpson, 'Dublin's Famous "Bully's Acre": Site of the Monastery of

- Kilmainham?', in *Medieval Dublin IX. Proceedings of the Friends of Medieval Dublin Symposium 2007*, ed. S. Duffy (Dublin, 2009), pp. 38–83; *AB* 854, trans. p. 55–56, with note at p. 55, n. 1. For Noirmoutier, see N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany* (London, 1989), pp. 22–23.
58. *ASCADE* 877 (the B and C versions do not mention the fortress).
 59. *ASC* 867.
 60. On food supplies for the *micel here* see S. McLeod, 'Feeding the *Micel Here* in England c.865–878', *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 2 (2006), pp. 141–56 (online at <<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~medieval/jaema2/mcleod.html>>).
 61. *ASC* 877.
 62. *Annals of St Neots*, ed. Dumville and Lapidge, p. 75.
 63. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 42.
 64. *ASC* 878; Asser, ch. 52, p. 40; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 83.
 65. Asser, ch. 56, p. 46, refers to Chippenham as a 'stronghold' (*castra*) with 'gates' (*portas*); trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 85.
 66. Examples include the increase in Viking attacks on Francia during and after the civil wars of 840–3: *AB* s.a. 841, 842, 843, 844; the *micel here*'s successful attack on Northumbria in 866 during a dynastic dispute there: *ASC* 867; Gothfrith's attack on Armagh before the Feast of St Martin, when the monastery was full of visitors, who could be captured and sold as slaves: *Annals of Ulster*, ed. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, s.a. 921, pp. 372–73.
 67. Halsall, *Warfare and Society*, p. 155.
 68. Asser, ch. 52, p. 40; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 83; see R. Abels, 'English Logistics and Military Administration 871–1066: the Impact of the Viking Wars', in *Military Aspects of Scandinavian Society in a European Perspective AD 1–1300: Papers from an International Research Seminar at the Danish National Museum, Copenhagen, 2–4 May 1996*, ed. A. N. Jørgensen and B. L. Clausen (Copenhagen, 1997), pp. 257–65, at pp. 258–59.
 69. Asser ch. 54, pp. 43–44; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 83–84.
 70. *L'Estoire des Engleis by Geffrei Gaimar*, ed. A. Bell (Oxford, 1960), lines 3143 and 3152; for Ívarr see Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 35; Halfdan is first mentioned in the *ASC* at Reading in 871.
 71. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 43; Asser, ch. 54, pp. 43; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 84.
 72. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 248, n. 101.
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101. Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, p. 40.
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103. *AB* 858.
104. *ASC* A 914 (Flatholme), BCD (Steeppholm).
105. See the different translations of Swanton, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, p. 98, and Whitelock, p. 63.
106. I am grateful to my former colleague, Julia Crick, for advice on this.
107. '[P]er omnes portus et ostia fluminum, qua naves recipi posse videbantur, stationibus et excubiis dispositis, ne qua hostis exire potuisset, tali munitione prohibuit.' Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. Waitz, ch. 17, p. 21, trans. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, p. 27.
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109. *ASC* 914; Viking war-bands had been expelled from Dublin by the Irish in 902 and the arrival of this fleet at Waterford was noted in *Annals of Ulster*, ed. Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill, s.a. 902, p. 353 (discussed by the editors at p. 36); see A. Woolf, 'View from the West: an Irish Perspective on West Saxon Dynastic Practice', in *Edward the Elder 899–924*, ed. N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London, 2001), pp. 89–101, at p. 90.
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113. R. Fleming, 'Monastic Lands and England's Defence in the Viking Age', *EHR* 100 (1985), pp. 247–65, at p. 253; but note Dumville's reservations about Fleming's arguments in his *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 29–54.
114. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 806; Finberg, *Early Charters of Wessex*, p. 145, no. 510, and p. 128, no. 424.
115. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 373; Finberg, *Early Charters of Wessex*, p. 36, no. 39; J. Haslam, 'King Alfred and the Vikings: Strategies and Tactics 876–886 AD', *ASSAH* 13 (2005), pp. 122–54, at p. 144, makes the point that the king did not necessarily have to own the site to put its defences in order. The bishop could have been ordered by the king to arrange its defence. Nevertheless, it would appear that Edward was keen to have these strategic sites in royal hands.

CHAPTER FIVE

Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex: Towards a Reassessment of Anglo-Saxon Strategic Landscapes

John Baker and Stuart Brookes

Anglo-Saxon Wessex was no different from the rest of the British Isles or from contemporary Western Europe in experiencing regular armed conflict. Of the many conflicts that were waged, those with the Vikings were certainly not the only challenges to the West Saxon kingdom, even in the ninth and tenth centuries, but they were the most persistent and effective threat during the period for which documentation starts to become more abundant. These confrontations are, therefore, of crucial importance to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon military organisation, and its effects on other aspects of society. For these reasons Anglo-Saxon historians and archaeologists have shown considerable interest in charting the militarisation of society over the course of the Viking Age, and its implications for social relations and obligations, its impact on economic arrangements, and its connection with the rise of powerful centralised kingship, notions of nationhood, and the emergence of the institutionalised state.¹ In the discussion that follows, Wessex is taken as a focus, but it would be wrong to assess in geographical isolation the developments that occurred there, and it will be necessary to consider also the impact of militarisation beyond the West Saxon frontier. The conclusions drawn for Wessex are certainly applicable, to varying degrees, elsewhere.

Whatever the wider links between warfare and state formation, at their most prosaic the confrontations between the West Saxons and Danes

do reveal a great deal about Anglo-Saxon military strategy and its adaptability to changing situations. Hitherto, considerable research has focused on the major fortifications (burhs) constructed especially during the ninth and tenth centuries,² recorded in early sources such as the *Burghal Hidage* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and often revealed also by archaeological fieldwork.³ These researches have elucidated evidence for the planned characteristics of burghal developments – the spatial arrangements of properties, buildings, streets, and open spaces; the chronology of defensive features; and so on – as well as their role in overarching grand military strategy.⁴ This focus was entirely justified, given the significance of these sites and, more importantly, the potential to identify and examine them. It is a focus that has, moreover, been very successful. So impressive are these remains, and so evocative the administrative provision associated with them, that they have shaped much discussion of later Anglo-Saxon warfare. It is important, however, not to make the mistake of assuming that these fortifications *are* the strategic landscape. In fact, they are only one element within a much wider military matrix. Parts of that matrix underpinned the functions of strongholds, and even influenced their nature and location. At the same time, strongholds provided a supporting role for other aspects of the wider defensive environment. As T. M. Maguire observed, to understand ‘permanent fortresses as if they were *fortifications passagères* [field

works] is to subordinate strategy to fortification, whereas fortification should be the handmaid of strategy'.⁵ He pointed out that Napoleon called them 'oases in the desert', because they could be used in conjunction with mobile forces to facilitate a variety of strategic actions, but were not, in isolation, a decisive military tool.

It is the purpose of this paper to set out in outline some of the key elements of the wider strategic landscape, and to establish a new agenda for understanding West Saxon and early medieval warfare. It will do this by addressing three fundamental aspects of West Saxon military planning and organisation, which are in fact essential to any military response: infrastructure, knowledge of which must form the basis for military strategy; intelligence, without which armed response would have been muddled and fortifications little more than refuges; and systems of mobilisation, the bedrock of efficient armed responses to hostile threats. An approach that gives primacy to landscape can help us to make sense of the strategic decision-making evidenced by written texts and major archaeological monuments.

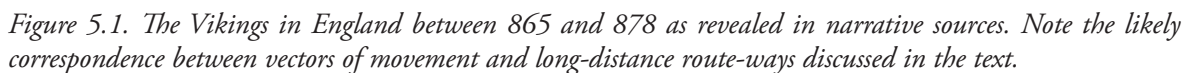
Infrastructure

The landscape of communication is fundamental to military action. Aggressors need to move through a hostile landscape as rapidly and safely as possible, inflicting damage on that landscape or delivering a decisive blow against opposing forces or positions. Defenders, meanwhile, must move to intercept an invading force, to control or limit its movement, or to retreat to secure refuges. All of these actions assume an ability to travel, and knowledge of infrastructure must therefore have been central to any offensive campaign or planned response to external threats. We know that rivers and roads were used as vectors of movement in the early medieval period, but much discussion of their efficiency has focused on use for non-military activity.⁶ If we consider the military implications of rivers as part of the infrastructural network of Wessex, we must be

more nuanced in our understanding of their variable and varying importance. The extent of navigability altered over time with climatic changes and human intervention, and depended also on boat design. Clearly the type of route-way it presented for the movement of heavy goods downstream in spring or autumn also differed starkly from that faced by an aggressive army launching an attack upriver during a dry summer. These factors would have affected the potential benefits of river-travel, and must have influenced the strategic choices made by attackers and defenders alike.⁷

A legacy of prehistoric, Roman, and early medieval settlement in Wessex is the extensive transport network of roads, ways, paths, and tracks whose use in the later Anglo-Saxon period is documented in place-names, charter boundary clauses, and archaeological evidence. Close analysis of these sources reveals the existence of a hierarchy of communications from routes of long-distance overland travel – the medieval equivalent of 'A' roads – to shorter discontinuous segments of local transportation. As is shown in David Hill's important plots of the events recorded in written sources,⁸ several long-distance route-ways can be closely correlated with military campaigns of the Vikings in the late ninth and early eleventh centuries, in particular the Icknield and Fosse Ways as well as, in all likelihood, the Roman roads of the south Dorset coast used in 876,⁹ and the Mildenhall (Wilts.)–Winchester–Solent route taken in 1006 (Figure 5.1).¹⁰ Indeed, of these, the Icknield Way must be regarded as the major trans-regional highway linking Wessex with the Danelaw. This makes sense of, amongst other things, the importance of Wallingford (Berks., now Oxon.) in the *Burghal Hidage* (where it is assessed with an equivalent provision to Winchester) as a major bulwark against landward attacks, and also the events of 1006, when the Danes progressed along the Icknield Way from Wallingford to *Cwicchelmes hlewe* (discussed below) and from there to the battle at the Kennet (probably at Overton Hill, Wilts.).¹¹

These major Roman roads and prehistoric track-



acting almost as ‘B’ roads. Two examples serve to illustrate this tendency (Figure 5.2).

Fieldwork on the village of Yatesbury (Wilts.) in the 1990s revealed evidence for a north–south path, originally *c.*2.8 m wide but increasing in size as the road ditches were subsequently recut.¹² This road continues in present-day routes and

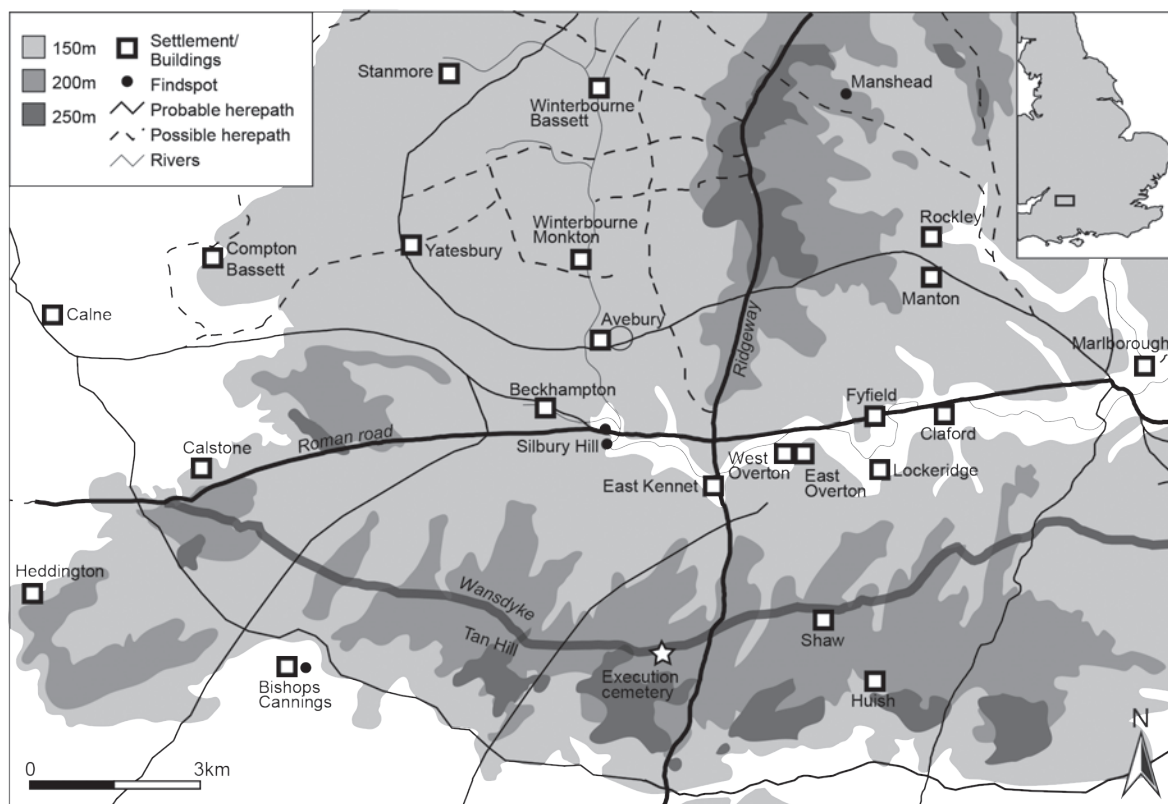


Figure 5.2. Named *herepaðas* in the Avebury region, showing also the Domesday settlement pattern, and sites mentioned in the text.

field boundaries as a track arcing south-eastwards to Avebury, and then eastwards crossing the Great Ridgeway (Icknield Way) onto the high downland before turning to the southeast in the direction of Marlborough. North of Yatesbury the road continues around the Lower Chalk shelf that skirts the Marlborough Downs before joining up with the Roman road linking *Cunetio* (Mildenhall, near Marlborough) with Cirencester (Glos.). Importantly, at several points along the course of this route, written sources refer to the road as a *herepað*, including the bounds of an authentic charter of 939.¹³

A similar road links Malmesbury with Calne and Pewsey. Crossing the Bristol Avon at Christian Malford it is named as Hare Street in Bremhill

parish.¹⁴ From Calne the road passes Beacon Hill travelling southeast towards All and Bishop's Cannings, skirting between Cannings Marsh and the upland scarp of the downs. East of Bishop's Cannings the route passes Harepath Farm,¹⁵ before proceeding to Allington, Stanton St Bernard, Alton Barnes and Alton Priors, and finally joining the *Ealden Walweg* (Workway Drove) to Pewsey mentioned in a charter dated to 825.¹⁶ East of Pewsey this road continues to Hare Street Copse in Milton Lilborne parish and Harepath Farm in Burbage,¹⁷ before climbing the scarp to Great Bedwyn and Chisbury.

In both the Yatesbury and Pewsey Vale instances, the identified *herepað* intersects with major Roman and prehistoric route-ways in a manner that

suggests the infilling of the transport network, perhaps even its partial replacement.¹⁸ Of course dating the construction of these roads is never straightforward, and there is no intention here to imply that the alignments of all roads called *herepæð* were Anglo-Saxon innovations, although Grundy asserted that the term was applied usually to non-Roman roads.¹⁹ Use of the label *herepæð* nevertheless suggests recognition of the importance of the routes concerned. It may be that the functional significance of the roads was a more important distinguishing marker than the context of their construction, which may, by the time they were named, have been hard to discern in many cases. Re-used Roman or prehistoric tracks, along with more recent Anglo-Saxon ones, might have been called *herepæðas* when they served an important strategic role and were used by large groups of people or armies. It may well be that they helped Anglo-Saxon forces intercept Viking armies marching along the better known Roman or pre-Roman 'A' roads, or were part of a process by which fortresses – great and small – were increasingly linked together by a dense network of communications.

Looked at nationally, the pattern of roads called *herepæð*, *-stræt* or *-weg* is distinctive (Figure 5.3). Their distributional centre of gravity is in the south, and specifically around the West Saxon heartlands. There are of course contextual reasons for this geographical bias. Firstly, terminological equivalents can perhaps be identified in the south Midlands, in the form of a series of microtoponymic or charter references to tracks known as *fyrðweg* or *fyrðstræt*, 'army road'. The compound *pēodweg*, 'nation road', which also occurs in the south Midlands, may be relevant as well, and other dialectal variations should not be ruled out. Secondly, Wessex is much better provided with surviving Anglo-Saxon charters than is the case in many other parts of the country. The second point can be countered by excluding charter boundary clauses and considering the occurrence of *herepæð* and related compounds in place-names only. Such an approach provides a

more uniform picture, but still weighted towards the south Midlands and South-West. Combined with the *fyrð*- and *pēod*-road-names, the impression is still that, while it existed further to the north, this terminology was more common in western Wessex and the south Midlands. It may be justified to think of roads of a certain type taking on a specific role within a militarised landscape, and being named accordingly. If that is the case, then this role seems to have arisen predominantly in a region of southern England that largely coincides with the zone of confrontation between West Saxon, Mercian and Viking forces operational during the ninth and early tenth centuries, but with the exclusion of Kent and Essex.

If the infrastructural landscape is concerned with vectors of movement, then strategists must also pay attention to terrain, which can serve as an obstacle to that very movement and which is therefore an important consideration for military planning. There are two elements to this – natural terrain, and modified terrain. It is increasingly clear that early medieval kings, including Alfred and his ancestors, used man-made structures to control access to their kingdoms.

Natural terrain had tactical implications. Those relating to water transport have been touched on above, and in battlefield situations it is clear that advantageous ground was often sought, and that the terrain that fitted this description varied depending on the types of force confronting one another.²⁰ Terrain also had a strategic importance. Estuaries, areas of marsh or extensive woodland could provide natural refuge, as exemplified by Alfred's flight in 878 *after wudum ... on morfestenum*, which might be translated 'through woods [*i.e.* Selwood]... to the places made secure (or inaccessible) by moorland'.²¹ Alfred's knowledge of both woodland and the Somerset Levels presumably gave him a decisive advantage by which he was able to elude Guthrum's forces until he was ready to meet them on his own terms. This episode represents an essentially reactive use of terrain, but terrain could also be used as part

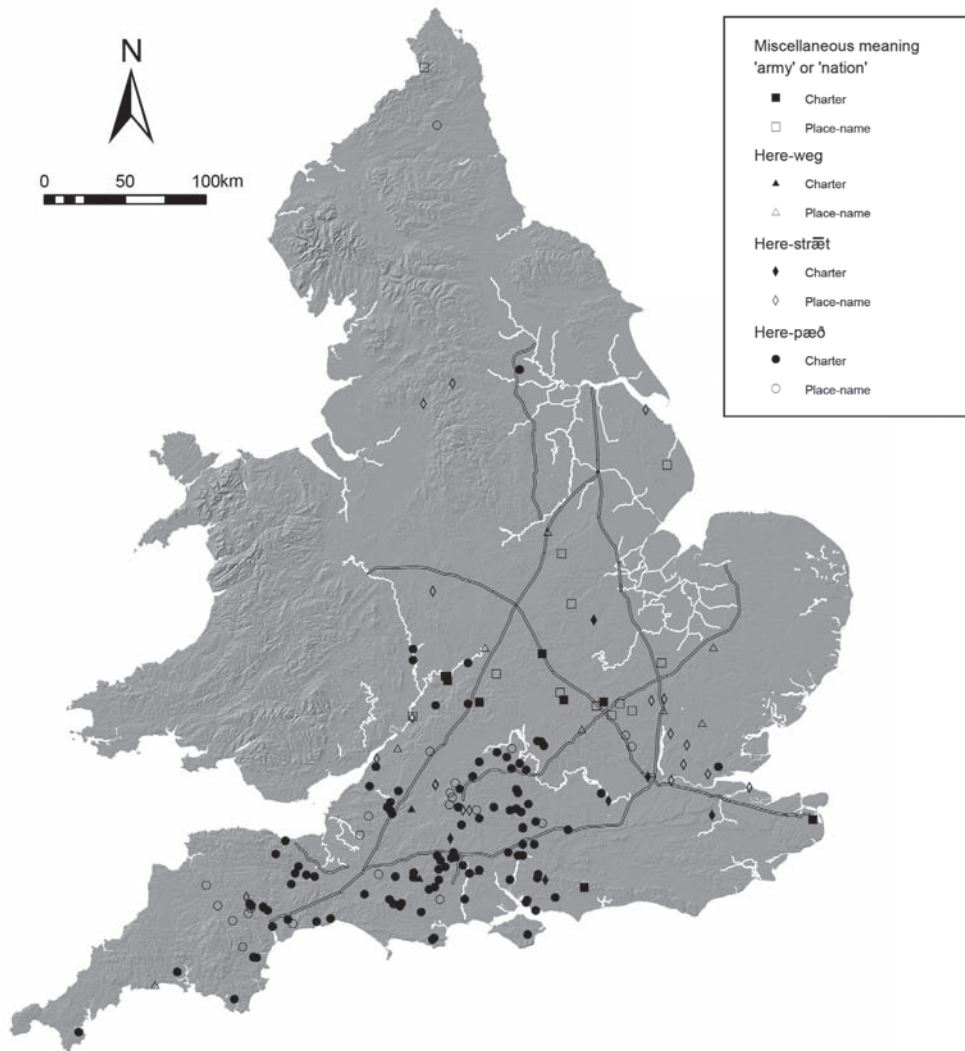


Figure 5.3. Occurrences of *herepæð* and related compounds in England.

of a planned response to external threats, helping to funnel enemy movement through predictable channels.

To use a non-West Saxon example, in Cambridgeshire natural and artificial terrain are brought into tandem by a series of massive dykes cutting across the Icknield corridor between the East Anglian Heights and the East Anglian Fens, the former perhaps heavily wooded, the latter

marshy, and both impractical for the manoeuvring of large land armies, herds of cattle and so on. In this way, movement through the intervening agricultural landscape and access between East Anglia and the east Midlands was limited to gaps in the linear earthworks. These controlled gaps naturally became the focus of multiple track-ways.²² In Wessex, fieldwork on East Wansdyke by Peter Fowler appears to show that one purpose of this

linear earthwork was similarly to channel and restrict movement across the Chalk upland.²³ At the point where Wansdyke cuts across the Icknield Way/Great Ridgeway, several gateways control movement through the monument. Three *gatu*, 'gates, gaps', are mentioned by name in charters of the tenth century and seven more have been deduced from fieldwork.²⁴ Many appear now as gaps in the monument, aligned on the various tracks that comprise the Ridgeway route, but two of the gates named in the tenth century have more elaborate arrangements with outworks, north of Wansdyke, channelling movement from major long-distance route-ways through the earthwork via narrow causeways.

A landscape approach to travel can also help us to characterise the nature of the Thames – which at times formed part of the West Saxon frontier – as a vector and barrier to movement of armies, and throw light on the use of terrain within a military strategy. It is worth remembering Guy Halsall's observation that early medieval armies depended on a small number of well-established long-distance route-ways.²⁵ If using overland routes, they needed reliable roads and they needed to find their destination through countryside with which they may not have been familiar, although scouts were presumably employed. Just as importantly, armies needed to maintain their coherence, and use of multiple smaller lanes would have made that harder. Remaining on well-known roads would, however, have limited their options, as would the availability of crossing points, when an army approached a major river such as the Thames. In this respect, it would have been significant to West Saxon military planners that upstream of Goring (Oxon.) the Thames was fordable or bridged at many points, while below that point reliable crossing-points were few in number or depended on ferries.

Again, it must be stressed that movement of armies is very different from movement of heavy goods and chattels. In the case of river-crossings, transport of the latter does not necessarily require speed or tactical coordination; the aim is simply

for the goods to be transferred from one bank to the other safely and undamaged. For an army to cross a river, it must quickly take control of a section of the opposite bank, and hold it against hostile counter-measures while the rest of the force makes the crossing. Surprise is therefore an advantage; and, if the whole army can cross almost as one, then it might have a good chance of success. At non-fordable places, however, this assumes sufficient berths on the ferries to cater for all the troops; adequate space suitable for beaching/docking on each bank for those vessels to be loaded and disembarked in parallel; and an undefended opposing bank. Any misjudgement may result in catastrophe. This might make the upper Thames a strategically more vulnerable zone than its lower, less easily forded stretches.²⁶

It is against this background that West Saxon defensive arrangements along the Thames should be judged. Whatever the dating of the system reflected in the text known as the *Burghal Hidage* (and that is a subject of some debate),²⁷ it is no surprise that the upper Thames was provided during the late ninth and early tenth centuries with three impressive strongholds at Wallingford, Oxford and Cricklade (Wilts.). It is equally clear that the stronghold at Southwark shielded the road network from hostile elements operating in the estuary or north of the Thames, but the defences here are of a different kind from those listed above, perhaps reflecting the different nature of the threat. In the same vein, we might ask why no recorded stronghold was constructed opposite Staines (Middx.), where the London to Silchester road crossed the Thames, and why Sashes (Berks.) was considered an appropriate site for a *Burghal Hidage* fort when the road crossing at that point was of less importance. In a sense, of course, such strongholds are one of the clearest expressions of a modification of terrain, both for tactical and strategic purposes. Strategically, Sashes and Southwark (Surrey) could go a considerable way to controlling movement along the Thames without a major investment in permanent defences, because riverine operations can be so much more

complicated than those restricted to land-routes. The major strongholds further upriver could, moreover, control entry into Wessex and provide a platform for the extension of influence over the lands to the north. Tactically, strongholds of this kind also provided refuge against superior forces and a depot for tactical reserves during defensive actions.

Intelligence

In a seminal article published in 1997,²⁸ David Hill and Sheila Sharp set out the evidence for the manning of lookouts and the use of beacons in Anglo-Saxon England, and used a combination of contemporary charter evidence and later records of beacon networks to attempt a reconstruction of a medieval early-warning system in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Lookout posts are not, of course, the first source of military intelligence, and there is at least circumstantial evidence for espionage in early medieval Europe and more pertinently in late Anglo-Saxon England.²⁹ Scouts, who are also evidenced in early medieval contexts,³⁰ might gain information concerning the size and tactics of opposing forces at the same time as assessing terrain for an advancing army. Lookouts and beacons are, however, the most likely source of military intelligence to leave an impression in the landscape, both physical and especially toponymic. It is worth, therefore, examining in closer detail some of the evidence for lookouts in Wessex and their position within an overarching strategic framework.

The Yatesbury excavations mentioned above also revealed archaeological evidence for a probable beacon mound, lying at the western edge of a large and long-lived 200-m-wide enclosure.³¹ Excavation of the mound revealed it to be a turf-built barrow of early Bronze-Age date, which had subsequently been remodelled to form a raised flattened platform, the surface of which comprised a horizon of fire-reddened soil. As part of this phase, a ditch cut into the lower part of the mound contained two distinct layers of charcoal-rich and burnt soils

separated by a layer of cleaner soil, datable from recovered finds from the basal fill of the ditch to the late Anglo-Saxon period (Figure 5.4).

In an analysis of this evidence in its landscape context, Andrew Reynolds argued that the Yatesbury beacon must be regarded as part of a chain of intervisible signalling points stretching across the Marlborough Downs. This chain appears to have linked Yatesbury with contemporary settlements, including Silbury Hill and Marlborough, both Wiltshire sites which have further archaeological evidence for late Anglo-Saxon occupation.³² A horse bit of eleventh-century type was recovered from the summit of Silbury Hill as early as the eighteenth century,³³ whilst features excavated in the 1968–70 campaign,³⁴ and encountered again in the 2007–8 excavations attest to the probable existence of a defensive palisade around the summit of the mound by the early eleventh century.³⁵ Although archaeological evidence from Marlborough is more fragmentary, the plan-form of the settlement strongly suggests its morphogenesis as a planned burh of the tenth century.³⁶ Between these two sites, a further beacon relay is revealed by the place-name Totterdown (perhaps from OE *tōt-arn-dūn*, ‘lookout-house hill’) on the high downland between Avebury and Marlborough a short distance north of the Yatesbury *herepæð* (Figure 5.2).

This relationship of probable lookout/beacon sites with militarised route-ways – probably including roads described as *herepæðas*, but more generally lines of communication likely to have been of special importance in serving fortified sites and transporting military personnel – can be demonstrated elsewhere. There is good reason to believe that a line of lookouts was capable of providing the stronghold at Wallingford with information relating to movements along the Icknield Way.³⁷ Similarly, a line of possible lookout place-names in Sussex seems to relate to the coastal roads, and indeed their lines of visibility suggest a greater concern with inland routes (especially overland but also riverine) than with seaways, and possible intervisibility with



Figure 5.4. Yatesbury, Wiltshire. Photograph of the west-facing section of the ditch cut around the modified Bronze Age mound. Note the dark charcoal-rich fills. (Image courtesy of Andrew Reynolds)

late Anglo-Saxon strongholds at places such as Burpham (Sussex).³⁸ The evidence from Yatesbury, the Icknield Way and Sussex is important in underlining the connectedness of observation posts and strategic elements of the military landscape. While nationwide beacon systems may have served to alert whole populations of the approach of a fleet or a hostile land-force (as outlined by Hill and Sharp), they probably had an important parallel role in providing broad but geographically specific details about enemy movements within the theatre of conflict, and presumably therefore helped to inform tactical decisions taken on the ground. Moreover, the evidence from the Yatesbury beacon chain, where relays were only around 6 km apart, reveals just how dense this network of intelligence could be, depending on

the strategic sensitivity of the local landscape. Viewsheds produced for Yatesbury, Silbury Hill, Totterdown and Marlborough show these sites to have good topographical coverage, suggesting a concern with territorial control, policing routes and the populations moving along them, not just communication between two distant points.³⁹ The connectedness of these lookouts with strongholds in use during the late ninth or tenth centuries, and their location in areas (such as the south-east Midlands) that written sources indicate were the venue of West Saxon military campaigns at that time, is suggestive of an active use of such observation posts by Alfred and his immediate descendants. This is not to say that such sites were previously non-existent, or that they were not (re-) used subsequently.

Mobilisation

However effective military planning and intelligence might be, an army cannot be genuinely efficient without an adequate system to bring its component parts together, properly prepared, and at the right time, in the right place. Anglo-Saxon military actions therefore presuppose an established system of mobilisation. It might, indeed, be more accurate to say established systems, since there is no reason to assume that planned, usually offensive campaigns employed exactly the same processes as reactive, defensive responses. The processes that underlay mobilisation were closely tied in with forms of military obligation, and these matters – relating to hierarchical relationships, numbers serving in the army and their social background – have been discussed at some length.⁴⁰ It is clear, however, that the foundations of Anglo-Saxon systems of mobilisation, at least according to narrative sources, consisted of a series of mustering sites. Changes in military structure are likely, therefore, to be reflected in changes to the geography of mobilisation, and this should be open to examination within a landscape study.

Explicit references to military musters in Anglo-Saxon sources are few, but in one famous instance a relatively detailed account is provided by the *Chronicle*. This relates to King Alfred's advance against Guthrum in the spring of 878, after a period of refuge in the Somerset Levels. On this occasion, Alfred broke his journey towards Wiltshire at a place called *Ecgbryhtes stan* to the east of Selwood, and was joined there by forces from Somerset, Wiltshire and Hampshire. The following night he broke his journey again at *Iglea* (Iley Oak in Wiltshire), although we are not told if he was joined by more troops, before advancing to battle at *Epandun* (probably Edington in Wiltshire) the next day. This episode has been discussed by several authors,⁴¹ and there is no need to repeat in detail their conclusions concerning the probable location of the places named, the significance of the provenance of the forces, or the system of

mobilisation the episode clearly reflects. All of these things are, however, significant for understanding the choice and nature of mustering sites, and they have wider implications for our understanding of these processes across Wessex and Anglo-Saxon England.

Wherever it was, *Ecgbryhtes stan* is a type of place-name paralleled at other major sites of assembly, consisting as it does of a personal name with important royal associations (Egbert, grandfather of Alfred) and a generic (*stān* 'stone') denoting the type of feature often used as a focal point of assembly.⁴² *Cwicchelmes hlæwe* – 'Cwichelm's mound' (now Scutchmer Knob in Berkshire) – belongs here,⁴³ as a shire assembly site named after what might be considered a royal hero. Offlow, 'Offa's mound', in Staffordshire is one of a number of hundred-names that are also relevant.⁴⁴ As suggested by Howard Williams,⁴⁵ these locations may have had special importance in the Anglo-Saxon consciousness, and it is surely significant that at least two of them, *Ecgbryhtes stan* and *Cwicchelmes hlæwe*, are associated in narrative sources with military forces. At the same time, Aylesford (Kent) and Beverstone in Langtree Hundred (Glos.), both sites of military muster in the *Chronicle*, were also hundredal meeting-places,⁴⁶ as was Iley Oak.

Two points might be made here. Firstly, given the association between known sites of muster and tenth- or eleventh-century hundredal assemblies, it is not unreasonable to suggest that many hundred meeting-places were also used as sites of military muster. It would be hard to prove this through fieldwork, since such sites have an ephemeral archaeological signature, and if the weapons-bearing sections of society were present at hundredal assemblies (as presumably they were), then there would have been very little practical difference between an administrative and a military gathering. In that case, it might be suggested that a very regular system of muster existed by the tenth century, coinciding with the establishment late in the ninth century of a more regimented military

system, based on a continual cycle of mobilisation and relief of its personnel. The two developments might not be entirely unrelated.

Secondly, it seems that a further class of assembly site existed above the level of the hundred, serving the shire or in some instances multiple shires. These might have been contemporary with the hundredal system, but it is worth noting that by the tenth century a system of burhs would have provided a secure site for mustering shire or multi-shire forces, and if the hundredal system itself served as a regular system of mustering for the regularly organised late Anglo-Saxon *fyrð*, then the multi-shire moots may have had an alternative purpose. It is, for instance, possible that these major mustering sites were a relic of an earlier system, or held symbolic importance as staging posts at the beginning of an offensive campaign.

Evidence for shire-level mustering sites comes from a variety of sources, but a characteristic of all of them is their proximity to shire boundaries, often at the points where the edges of three shires meet. Wherever the precise location of the inter-shire rallying point of *Ecgbryhtes stan*, it seems likely from the annal that it lay east of Selwood Forest, somewhere directly between Chippenham and Athelney (Som.), and was easily accessible from, and probably close to, the shire boundaries of Somerset and Wiltshire.⁴⁷ Similar criteria appear to underscore the location of *Cwicchelmes hlæwe*, which lies on the Icknield Way, just 500 m west of the Berkshire/Wiltshire boundary. Outside Wessex, a number of shire musters have been identified through the occurrence of OE *here*, 'army', in their place-names, and many of these also have a noticeable correlation with shire boundaries (Figure 5.5).⁴⁸ In more southern regions – including much of heartland Wessex – a particularly striking form of meeting-place, which may have served the same function, has recently been discussed.⁴⁹ Termed 'hanging promontories', these sites take the form of domed hillocks of up to 100 m diameter located on distinctive spurs of land protruding below a crest of higher ground. The high ground is often the

location of a junction of several parish boundaries, and the site is usually marked by a well-worn holloway descending further downslope beside the promontory (Figure 5.6). Taken together, these sites appear to indicate the existence of a national system of shire-level military mobilisation.

Conclusion

Donald Rumsfeld famously categorised military threats as 'known knowns', 'known unknowns', and 'unknown unknowns', the last of which he considered to be the most difficult to deal with.⁵⁰ Governments and generals can set plans to counter visible threats, but the danger of the unexpected is very real. Before the *micel here* arrived in East Anglia in 865 it may well have been an 'unknown unknown'; but most military threats to the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms must have been at the very least 'known unknowns'. Even Beaduheard, the unfortunate Dorset reeve cut down by Scandinavian adventurers during the reign of Beorhtric (786–802),⁵¹ must have understood the potential for these strangers to misbehave – otherwise his approach to them would have been unnecessary. During the ninth century, Vikings were operating across Europe. Whatever their psychological impact on Christendom, it is inconceivable that they remained militarily enigmatic for long. Even if Viking seamanship and consequent ability to change the point of operations was in some way mysterious, or at least hard to match, it was not, after the 790s, entirely impossible to plan for. Knowledge of the capacities and limitations of opposing forces is an important element in developing an overall strategy.

The West Saxons therefore could and certainly did make detailed plans to confront the external threats they faced, both from Vikings and from more traditional and conventional foes such as the Cornish and the Mercians. Their strategies should not be seen in isolation, but as part of a chronologically long evolution of defensive arrangements across Anglo-Saxon England, the



Figure 5.5. Possible late Anglo-Saxon mustering sites in England.

British Isles and Western Europe. Moreover, these strategies cannot be divorced from the landscape in which they were so deeply rooted. We have intentionally avoided overemphasising chronology, not least out of recognition of the long-term nature

of the processes involved in creating a strategic landscape, but also because dating individual elements of that landscape is very different from dating the landscape itself. It is wrong, then, to think of the *Burghal Hidage* as evidence of an

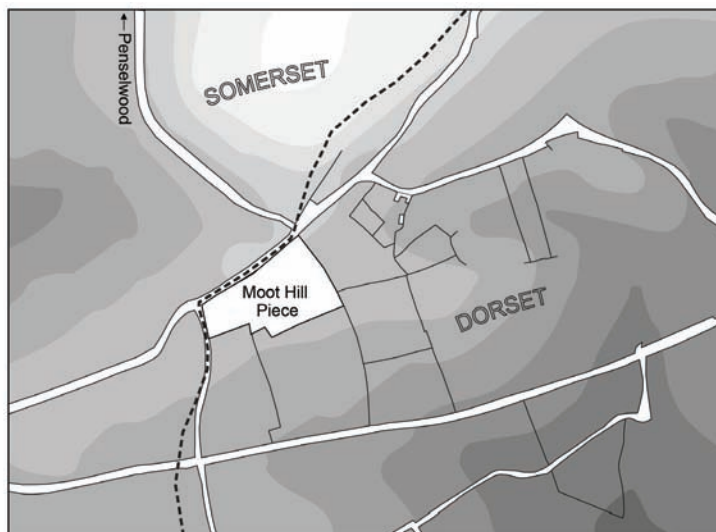


Figure 5.6. (above) Plan of the 'hanging promontory' site by Moot Hill adjacent to the shire boundary of Dorset and Somerset, and (below) photograph of the extensive views south from the meeting-place over northern Dorset. Of great significance is the location of this putative shire mustering place just 1 km southeast of Penselwood in Somerset, named as the location of a battlefield in 1016, and Coombe Street (Somerset), one of the possible locations of Ecgbryhtes stan.

entirely new strategy, but the modification of a longer defensive tradition. Strongholds of one kind or another had, after all, been in use in Wessex and neighbouring kingdoms before the tenth century, and must have held some of the same functions. These functions only succeeded alongside much wider strategic networks, made up of elements that supported and made use of fortified sites.

The military emphasis changed over time, and the apparatus was constantly modified and adapted to changing situations. However, the underlying strategies were probably not replaced, but evolved.

All around the well-known strongholds of late ninth- and early tenth-century Wessex was a complex and intricate landscape matrix of defence, probably touching the lives of every inhabitant

of the kingdom in important ways. Away from the battlefield or the garrison, the obligations to maintain roads and bridges, to man lookouts and (presumably) maintain stocks of beacon-wood, to dig and reinforce defensive earthworks, to provision strongholds, and perhaps (from the tenth century at least) to turn out at regular muster were of the utmost importance. Those charged with planning defensive arrangements also required a detailed understanding of the strategic landscape: the most likely routes of advance and the barriers to movement; the most effective points at which that movement could be observed; the logistical realities of bringing an army together within an existing framework of mustering sites. Their role was firstly to create a system of military response that made the best use of those elements; and secondly, to modify the strategic landscape where necessary. Major strongholds were one important modification, but probably no more significant than the creation of linear earthworks, the maintenance of route-ways, or the provision of observational relays to transmit intelligence of enemy movements; they were perhaps ultimately only as wide-reaching in their impact as changes to the structure of mobilisation associated with developments in the staffing of the army, and intimately tied to the landscape. Each of these elements of the physical environment of defensive strategy must be given due consideration, and it is only through a multidisciplinary approach that the full impact of military activity on the West Saxon landscape can really be understood.

Notes

1. Important contributions to these debates include: F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond: Three Essays in the Early History of England* (Cambridge, 1897); C. W. Hollister, *Anglo-Saxon Military Institutions: On the Eve of the Norman Conquest* (Oxford, 1962); N. Brooks, 'The Development of Military Obligations in Eighth- and Ninth-Century England', in *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971) pp. 69–84; R. Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Berkeley, CA, 1988); D.

- Hill and A. R. Rumble (eds), *The Defence of Wessex: the Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications* (Manchester, 1996); A. Reynolds, 'Archaeological Correlates for Anglo-Saxon Military Activity in Comparative Perspective', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. J. Baker, S. Brookes and A. Reynolds (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 1–38.
2. To avoid confusion, in this chapter, burh is treated as a modern part of historical and archaeological vocabulary, rather than an Old English word with associated semantic implications. It is therefore pluralised as burhs and is not italicised.
 3. For example: N. Brooks, 'The Unidentified Forts of the *Burghal Hidage*', *Medieval Archaeology* 8 (1964), pp. 74–89; D. Hill, 'The *Burghal Hidage*: the Establishment of a Text', *Medieval Archaeology* 13 (1969), pp. 84–92; J. Haslam (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England* (Chichester, 1984); Hill and Rumble (eds), *Defence of Wessex*.
 4. See in particular M. Biddle and D. Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', *Antiquaries Journal* 51 (1971), pp. 70–85; Hill and Rumble (eds), *Defence of Wessex*; and various contributions in Haslam (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Towns*. More detailed discussion of this point appears in J. Baker and S. Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 43–135. The role of burhs in grand strategy has been discussed most recently by J. Haslam, 'King Alfred and the Vikings: Strategies and Tactics 876–886 AD', *ASSAH* 13 (2006), pp. 122–54; J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'From Frontier to Border: the Evolution of Northern West Saxon Territorial Delineation in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries', *ASSAH* 17 (2011), pp. 104–19.
 5. T. M. Maguire, *Military Geography* (Cambridge, 1899), p. 221.
 6. Especially trade; see e.g. J. F. Edwards and B. P. Hindle, 'The Transportation System of Medieval England and Wales', *Journal of Historical Geography* 17 (2)(1991), pp. 123–34; 'Comment: Inland Water Transportation in Medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 19 (1)(1993), pp. 12–14; J. Langdon, 'Inland Water Transport in Medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 19 (1) (1993), pp. 1–11; E. T. Jones, 'River Navigation in Medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (1)(2000), pp. 60–75; J. Langdon, 'Inland Water Transport in Medieval England – the View from the Mills: a Response to Jones', *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (1)(2000), pp. 75–82; J. Blair (ed.), *Waterways and Canal-building in Medieval England* (Oxford, 2007); but cf. e.g. C. Gillmor, 'War on the

- Rivers: Viking numbers and mobility on the Seine and Loire, 841–886', *Viator* 19 (1988), pp. 79–109, for an attempt to understand rivers as military route-ways.
7. Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*; J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Overseeing the Sea: Some West Saxon Responses to Waterborne Threats in the South-East', in *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, ed. S. S. Klein, S. Lewis-Simpson and W. Schipper (Tempe, AZ, 2014), pp. 37–58.
 8. D. Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 40 and 67.
 9. I. D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain* (London, 1955–7; 3rd edn, 1973), routes 4e, 4f and 49.
 10. Margary, *Roman Roads*, routes 43 and 42b.
 11. T. J. T. Williams, 'The Place of Slaughter: Vikings and the West Saxon Battlescape', above, pp. 35–55.
 12. A. Reynolds and S. Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Localities: a Case Study of the Avebury Region', in *The Northern World in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of James Graham-Campbell*, ed. A. Reynolds and L. Webster (Leiden, 2013), pp. 561–606.
 13. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 449. Further evidence for this *herepæd* is outlined in detail in A. Reynolds, 'Avebury, Yatesbury and the Archaeology of Communications', *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 6 (1995), pp. 21–30; Reynolds and Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Localities'.
 14. So-named in 1775; J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Wiltshire* (Cambridge, 1939), p. 87.
 15. There is a *Harepath Way* recorded here c.1840; Gover, Mawer and Stenton, *Place-Names of Wiltshire*, p. 251.
 16. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 272.
 17. Cf. *Harepatch Common* 1773, *Harepath* 1820; Gover, Mawer and Stenton, *Place-Names of Wiltshire*, p. 339.
 18. S. Brookes, 'Mapping Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence', in *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Baker, Brookes and Reynolds, pp. 39–63, has attempted to define the relative chronology of these route-ways through a detailed analysis of the topology of routes and of their relation to 'natural pathways', across the Avebury region. Perhaps significantly, A. Reynolds, 'From *Pagus* to Parish: Territory and Settlement in the Avebury Region from the Late Roman Period to the Domesday Survey', in *The Avebury Landscape: Aspects of the Field Archaeology of the Marlborough Downs*, ed. G. Brown, D. Field and D. McOmish (Oxford, 2005), pp. 164–80, has argued that the pattern of early medieval settlement in this area differs significantly from that of the Roman period, a factor which may have also led to the partial abandonment of the Roman road network.
 19. G. B. Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways and Tracks of Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Hampshire, and the Saxon Battlefields of Wiltshire', *Archaeological Journal* 2nd Ser. 75 (1918), pp. 69–194, at pp. 71–72; 'The Ancient Highways of Dorset, Somerset, and South-West England, Part 1', *Archaeological Journal* 94 (1938), pp. 257–90, at pp. 261–62.
 20. J. F. Verbruggen, *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe During the Middle Ages, from the Eighth Century to 1340*, trans. R. W. Southern (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 204–207; Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*.
 21. ASC A 878. There is a sense of this in the standard translations: 'inaccessible places in marshes', in G. N. Garmonsway (ed. and trans.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London: 1972), p. 74; 'fen-fastnesses', in *EHD* 1, p. 49; 'swamp-fastnesses', in M. Swanton (ed. and trans.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (London, 1996), p. 4. For a discussion of the meaning of *faesten* in place-names and charter bounds, see J. Baker, 'Old English *Faesten*', in *A Commodity of Good Names: Essays in Honour of Margaret Gelling*, ed. O. J. Padel and D. N. Parsons (Donington, 2008), pp. 333–44.
 22. C. Fox, 'Excavations in the Cambridgeshire Dykes', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 25 (1924), pp. 21–36, at pp. 27–31. Fox believed there to be no gap in Fleam Dyke at Mutlow Hill, and assumed that the tracks funnelling past it were simply using it for alignment. However, the Wrattling charter (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 794) begins by Mutlow Hill *æt ðan hean gatan*, which should probably be translated 'at the high gates'.
 23. P. Fowler, *Landscape, Plotted and Pieced* (London, 2000), pp. 196–200; 'Wansdyke in the Woods: an Unfinished Roman Military Earthwork for a Non-Event', in *Roman Wiltshire and After, Papers in Honour of Ken Annable*, ed. P. Ellis (Devizes, 2001), pp. 179–98.
 24. *Woddes geat* (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 272); *Eadgardes gete* (no. 784); *Titferthes geat* (no. 784); a fourth gate, the 'Short Oak Gate', is an invented name for a possible 'charter gate' of Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 424; Fowler, 'Wansdyke in the Woods'.
 25. G. Halsall, *Warfare and Society in the Barbarian West, 450–900* (London, 2003), p. 148.
 26. For a recent discussion of the logistical issues relating to trans-riverine military action, see J. Baker and S.

- Brookes, 'Fulham 878–79: a New Consideration of Viking Manoeuvres', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 8 (2012), pp. 23–52.
27. The literature on this question is extensive, but see Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, pp. 187–8 and 502–504; J. Tait, *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on its Origins and Constitutional History* (Manchester, 1936), pp. 15–18; F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1943; 3rd edn, 1971), pp. 264–65; N. Brooks, 'England in the Ninth Century: the Crucible of Defeat', *TRHS* 5th Ser. 29 (London, 1979), pp. 1–20, at p. 17; D. H. Hill, 'Appendix IV: Gazetteer of *Burghal Hidage* sites', in *Defence of Wessex*, ed. Hill and Rumble, pp. 189–231; Hill, 'The Origins of Alfred's Urban Policies', in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh Centenary Conferences*, ed. T. Reuter (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 219–34; Haslam, 'King Alfred and the Vikings'; Baker and Brookes, 'From Frontier to Border'.
 28. D. Hill and S. Sharp, 'An Anglo-Saxon Beacon System,' in *Names, Places and People: an Onomastic Miscellany for John McNeal Dodgson*, ed. A. R. Rumble and A. D. Mills (Stamford, 1997), pp. 157–65.
 29. For example R. Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998), pp. 159–60; B. S. Bachrach, *Early Carolingian Warfare: Prelude to Empire* (Philadelphia, 2001), pp. 202–205.
 30. Bachrach, *Early Carolingian Warfare*, pp. 188–90; Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*, pp. 179–80.
 31. Reynolds and Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Localities'.
 32. J. Pollard and A. Reynolds, *Avebury: the Biography of a Landscape* (Stroud, 2002), pp. 224–28, in which is also discussed the extension of this chain to include the late Anglo-Saxon burh of Avebury; more detailed discussion of the Yatesbury evidence is outlined in Reynolds and Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Localities'.
 33. W. Stukeley, *Abury, a Temple of the British Druids, with Some Others Described* (London, 1743), p. 158.
 34. R. Atkinson, 'Silbury Hill', in *Chronicle*, ed. R. Sutcliffe (London, 1978), pp. 159–73.
 35. Jim Leary, *pers. comm.*
 36. Significantly, both sites are known also for their large man-made mounds which could have served as highly visible beacon platforms; J. Haslam, 'The Towns of Wiltshire', in *Anglo-Saxon Towns*, ed. Haslam, pp. 87–147, at p. 101.
 37. J. Baker, 'Warriors and Watchmen: Place-Names and Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence', *Medieval Archaeology* 55 (2011), pp. 258–67; Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*.
 38. Baker and Brookes 'Overseeing the Sea'.
 39. Brookes, 'Mapping Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence'; Reynolds and Brookes, 'Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Localities'. Evidence for a similar hierarchy of beacon signalling in Roman contexts has been suggested by P. Southern, 'Signals versus Illumination on Roman Frontiers', *Britannia* 21 (1990), pp. 233–42.
 40. For example Hollister, *Anglo-Saxon Military Institutions*; Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation*; R. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 47–140.
 41. For example J. Peddie, *Alfred Warrior King* (Stroud, 1999), pp. 134–42; A. H. Burne, *More Battlefields of England* (London, 1952), repr. in *The Battlefields of England* (London, 2002), p. 55; P. Marren, *Battles of the Dark Ages: British Battlefields AD 410 to 1065* (Barnsley, 2006), p. 13. On the possible location of *Eggbryhtes stan* see n. 42 below. The link between mobilisation and the exploitation of royal *feorm* is discussed by Ryan Lavelle in his 'Geographies of Power in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: the Royal Estates of Wessex', in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. A. D. Jorgensen (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 187–219, and in *Alfred's Wars*, 178–80.
 42. A. Pantos, 'Assembly-Places in the Anglo-Saxon Period: Aspects of Form and Location' (Oxford Univ., DPhil thesis, 3 vols, 2002), Vol. 3, p. 577.
 43. ASC CDE 1006; Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1454.
 44. J. Baker, 'Meeting in the Shadow of Heroes? Personal Names and Assembly Places', in *Power and Place in Later Roman and Early Medieval Europe: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Governance and Civil Organization* ed. J. Carroll, A. Reynolds and B. Yorke (forthcoming). The apparent anonymity of the *Ægelnoð of *Ægelnoðesstane*, moot site for Herefordshire (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1462), may point to a lost figure, but also serves as a warning that these sites might sometimes have been named after local people with royal-sounding names.
 45. H. Williams, *Death and Memory in Early Medieval Britain* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 207–11.
 46. ASC CDE 1016; E 1051.
 47. Various sites have been considered for the location of Egbert's Stone including Alfred's Tower (Som.), Coombe Street, Willoughby Hedge and Kingston Deverill (all Wilts.), cf. Peddie, *Alfred: Warrior King*,

pp. 135–42. According to Abels, *Alfred the Great*, p. 161, the Egbert's Stone assembly was timed to coincide with Whitsuntide. This would have provided a clear and easily remembered meeting time for the *fyrð* of the three shires. He also argues that it is likely to have been undefended, thereby accounting for Alfred's short camp of one night at the meeting place. The conclusion of Peddie's analysis favours Kingston Deverill as the location of Egbert's Stone. Alfred's Tower is located too far west of Alfred's likely route to Edington; Coombe Street is on the boundary of a shire (Dorset) which did not supply men for the *fyrð*. The site of Willoughby Hedge similarly does not fit these criteria: although well connected – lying at the crossroads of the Icknield Way/Ridgeway, the Hardway, and the Grovely Ridgeway – it is an exposed location which is not directly accessible to troops moving from Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somerset. Kingston Deverill, on the other hand, is well situated for ease of accessibility, and located on a major crossroad of the Roman roads, Margary, *Roman Roads*, routes 45 and 52/56. It is the traditional site of Egbert's Stone; the name is given to two (originally three) large stones in the churchyard. Perhaps significantly there is a tradition that these stones came originally from King's Court Hill, c.200 m to the west, specifically from a large bowl barrow which forms a dominating and distinctive landmark in the locality. The case for

placing Egbert's Stone in the area around Coombe Street and the 'hanging promontory' site of Moot Hill, Dorset (see below) is discussed further in J. Baker, S. Brookes and T. Williams, 'The Battle of Penselwood (AD 1016) and the Landscape of Anglo-Saxon Warfare' (in preparation).

48. J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Explaining Anglo-Saxon Military Efficiency: the Landscape of Mobilisation' (forthcoming).
49. J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Monumentalising the Political Landscape: a Special Class of Anglo-Saxon assembly sites', *Antiquaries Journal* 93 (2013), pp. 147–62.
50. US Department of Defense News Briefing, 12 Feb. 2002. Transcript viewed at: <<http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2636>> (accessed 2 May 2012).
51. The A (Parker) recension of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (s.a. 789) describes this as the first such attack against the English, which would, at the very least, place it earlier than the attack on Lindisfarne in 793. The scribe of the A text does not, however, mention the destruction of Lindisfarne and might not, therefore, have been aware of it. Cf. D. Gore, 'A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses', above, p. 56, and S. Roffey and R. Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes: Negotiating Identities in the Early Middle Ages' above, p. 10.

Scandinavian-style Metalwork from Southern England: New Light on the 'First Viking Age' in Wessex

Jane Kershaw

Introduction

This chapter presents a survey of Viking-related metalwork from Anglo-Saxon Wessex, an area spanning the modern-day counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Hampshire. The chronological focus of the survey is the late ninth to mid tenth century: the later part of the so-called First Viking Age in England, corresponding with the period of Viking overwintering and settlement.¹ Unlike the north and east of England, the south is not a location of recorded Scandinavian settlement in this period. Indeed, Anglo-Saxon Wessex is often noted as the sole surviving Anglo-Saxon kingdom, whose ruler, King Alfred 'the Great', won a decisive military victory over the Viking Great Army at Edington (Wilts.) in 878 and successfully confined Viking settlement to the east of the Danelaw 'boundary'. The defence of Wessex against further Viking attacks in the 890s has likewise been attributed to Alfred's network of civil defences, most notably of *burhs* (fortifications).² Despite this, recently recovered metalwork from the region reveals that Anglo-Saxon Wessex assimilated a wider spectrum of Scandinavian cultural influences than previously thought. Whether due to a Viking presence or a process of cultural diffusion from areas of known Scandinavian settlement, these new finds prompt a re-evaluation of the Viking impact in the south.

In this chapter, I survey around twenty items of metalwork. Most, but not all, are recent metal-

detector finds recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). The material is grouped into three categories: personal dress fittings; bullion and bullion-related objects; and Insular and Continental metalwork. The range of artefacts is diverse, but they have shared characteristics: all items either display Scandinavian influence in their form or decoration and/or are likely to have circulated in Scandinavian hands, for instance, as Viking loot. Although overshadowed by the hundreds of comparable finds of Scandinavian-type metalwork now recorded from Danelaw territories, this material represents a highly significant addition to the limited, existing archaeological data for Scandinavian activity in Wessex.³ In this chapter, I hope to increase recognition of this – largely unexplored – material, and to provide a framework in which future discoveries of metalwork from Wessex can be assessed.

The bulk of the chapter is devoted to an exploration of this material: its function, background and parallels. Drawing on patterns observed in the material's chronology and geographic distribution, consideration is also given to the source of the metalwork and its likely historical context. Despite the absence of recorded Scandinavian settlement in Wessex, there are a number of possible backdrops to the circulation of Scandinavian-style metalwork. Viking raids sustained over much of the ninth and early tenth century offer one possible context.⁴ A prolonged period of Viking activity is documented



Figure 6.1. Trefoil brooch from Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

in the 870s, when the Viking army attempting to conquer Wessex established winter bases in Reading (Berks.), Wareham (Dors.), Exeter (Dev.), and Chippenham (Wilts.), as well as in Gloucester and Cirencester, outside of Wessex, in Gloucestershire. Commercial contact with the Danelaw and processes of cultural diffusion from Scandinavian-settled areas provide further possible import channels for the metalwork.⁵ Finally, the West Saxon ‘conquest’ of the Danelaw in the first decades of the tenth century may have also generated the movement of people – and artefacts – to the south.⁶ The conclusion reached in this chapter is that, rather than being connected with a narrow period of Viking activity in Wessex, such as the presence of the Great Army in the 870s, the metalwork spans a broad time period and probably derives from a mix of sources.

Dress Accessories

The presence of Scandinavian-style dress items outside of the Viking homelands is often a secure indicator of Scandinavian cultural influence. In certain circumstances, it may also indicate a

physical Viking presence. In England, hundreds of dress items in distinctly Scandinavian forms and styles have been recorded in recent years, predominantly from areas of known Scandinavian settlement in the north and east.⁷ A small corpus of dress accessories, totalling just a handful of finds, is also known from Wessex.

Unlike in the Scandinavian-settled Danelaw, where female brooches dominate the corpus of Scandinavian-style dress items, there is just one Scandinavian female brooch on record from Wessex: a gilded copper-alloy trefoil brooch found via metal-detecting in 2009, in Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire (Figure 6.1).⁸ The brooch has moulded decoration in the Scandinavian Borre style, comprising, in the centre, a raised boss with three animal-head projections and, in each lobe, a gripping beast with a looping, pretzel-shaped body and an en-face mask, set within a volute. Each volute is linked by a triple-stranded ring and is bound by two arms emanating from the sides of the central boss. No fittings survive on the reverse, but the remains of solder reveal the location of three original fittings: a pin-lug, catchplate and a third fitting, most likely an attachment loop. The

attachment loop is a distinctly Scandinavian feature of Viking Age brooches, used for the suspension of accessories and, occasionally, as an extra safety catch. Its presence on the Wiltshire trefoil indicates that the brooch was produced according to Scandinavian methods of manufacture.⁹

Both the form and style of the brooch identify it with a known Scandinavian trefoil brooch type dated to the late ninth and early tenth centuries: Birgit Maixner's Type Z 1.2, with parallels in Sweden and Norway.¹⁰ Two brooches from Norway share with the Wiltshire brooch a hollowing on the underside behind the central boss, and thus offer particularly close analogues. It is possible that all three trefoils derive from the same mould or master. That said, a clay mould potentially for trefoil brooches of this type is also known from Gnezdovo, Russia, raising the possibility that the manufacture of this trefoil type was geographically widespread.¹¹

The Longbridge Deverill brooch is one of over fifteen Scandinavian trefoil brooches found in English soil; still larger numbers were produced locally in imitation of Scandinavian styles.¹² With the exception of one other Borre-style trefoil brooch, from Bampton, Oxfordshire,¹³ all other examples come from the Danelaw, making the Longbridge Deverill trefoil a clear outlier. It is unlikely to have been produced locally and its context of loss is unclear. Importantly, the absence of attachment fittings indicates that it had ceased to function as a brooch prior to its loss or deposition. The item may, therefore, have been adapted for some secondary use or even preserved simply as scrap metal by the time that it reached Wessex.

The remaining Scandinavian-style dress accessories from Wessex comprise belt fittings, with ornament in, or relating to, the Scandinavian Borre style.¹⁴ The function of a strap-slide from Hannington, Hampshire,¹⁵ was to hold in place the end of a strap after it had passed through a buckle. It has a decorated rectangular plate with rounded corners and an integral rectangular loop (Figure 6.2). The plate is 2.8cm long and appears gilded,



Figure 6.2. Strap-slide from Hannington, Hampshire. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

although it was reportedly 'touched up' with gold paint by the finder. It has a plain raised border and a central raised concave-sided triangle, from which four strands emerge: two upper strands extend diagonally to the corners of the plate, while two lower strands angle upwards, creating V-shapes. A ring with two contours in its upper part and three in its lower loops around the central triangle, passing under the side strands to generate a closed ring.

Small strap-slides with square, oval and rectangular plates form a relatively common part of Carolingian spur-sets.¹⁶ They were also worn in Scandinavian dress, with leggings or footwear, or with waist belts. Within Scandinavia, nearly all strap-slides were decorated with simple geometric designs or the ring-knot and interlace motifs of the Borre style, a pattern that suggests that the fashion for such slides was contemporary with the currency of the Borre style: the late ninth and tenth centuries.¹⁷ It is to this Scandinavian tradition that the Hannington slide belongs, its closed ring motif essentially representing an attenuated form of the Borre ring-knot. Comparisons with similar motifs on other Scandinavian artefacts, such as a tongue-shaped brooch from Prestegården, Vestfold, Norway, suggest that the motif has zoomorphic



Figure 6.3. Tongue-shaped brooch from Prestegården, Vestfold, Norway. (After E. Wamers, 'Eine Zungenfibel aus dem Hafen von Haithabu', fig. 11, 1)

origins, the V-shaped lower strands reflecting the sharply angled limbs, and the central triangle the truncated bodies, of Borre-style beasts (Figure 6.3).¹⁸

The Hannington slide is particularly close in form and style to a Borre-style strap-slide from Kaagården, Langeland, Denmark, and a further slide of Scandinavian manufacture, found at Wharram Percy, Yorkshire (Figure 6.4, bottom).¹⁹ Both examples are more elaborate than the Hannington piece, with several zoomorphic stylistic elements still intact. They suggest a place of manufacture for the Hannington slide either within Scandinavia or in a Scandinavian milieu within the British Isles. Strap-slides are relatively rare finds in the British Isles: in most instances they either come from a Scandinavian find context or carry ornament in a Scandinavian style.²⁰ The appearance of a Borre-style slide in Hampshire in the late ninth or tenth century is thus likely to have been associated with a Scandinavian presence.

Alison Goodall and Caroline Paterson have suggested that the belt slide from Wharram Percy may have formed a set with a similarly decorated tongue-shaped strap-end from the same site (Figure 6.4, top).²¹ Interestingly, this strap-end has its

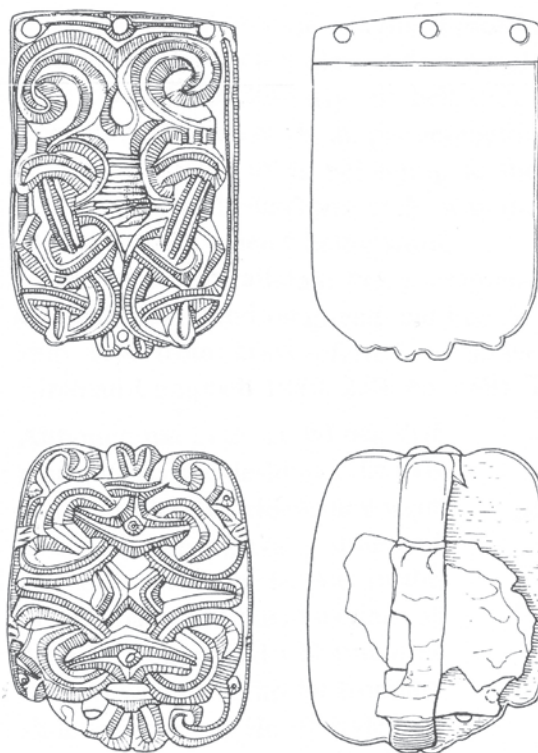


Figure 6.4. Strap-slide and strap-end from Wharram Percy, Yorkshire. (After A. R. Goodall and C. Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects', figs 61, 22 and 23)

own counterpart in a further Wessex find, from Mudford, Somerset (Figure 6.5).²² The Mudford strap-end is likewise tongue-shaped, with a central projecting knob. Its butt-end contains three rivet holes, two with the rivets still intact. The butt-end is recessed on the reverse, a design intended to allow the strap to be attached by an additional rectangular sheet of metal.²³ The form of the strap-end – tongue-shaped, with a projecting knob and recessed butt-end – are all features of Gabor Thomas's Class E strap-end, a form initiated on the Carolingian continent but widely adopted in England and Scandinavia during the ninth and tenth centuries.²⁴

The decoration on the front face of the strap-end consists of raised symmetrical interlace with



Figure 6.5. Strap-end from Mudford, Somerset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

scrolled terminals and looping, contoured strands with tendril-like ends, positioned on either side of a concave-sided sub-rectangular rib. No animal elements are visible, but comparisons with the strap-end from Wharram Percy suggest that the design has a zoomorphic origin (Figure 6.4, top). On the Wharram strap-end, the central concave-sided feature is ribbed. With this added element, the rib takes on the appearance of a stylised Borre- or Jellinge-style animal torso, while the scrolled terminals resemble the spiral hips, and the subsequent interlace the limbs, of the same creatures. This zoomorphic element is reflected in the angular movements of the scroll on the Mudford strap-end, which mirrors the sharply angled hips of Borre-style beasts.

The strap-end from Wharram is a close parallel for the Mudford item, although the latter is plainer, without the ribbing and border embellishments seen on the Wharram piece. The decorative scheme of both items is, however, ultimately rooted in a Scandinavian tradition, being descended from a motif of two symmetrical Borre/Jellinge-style creatures arranged over a long axis, which appears on Scandinavian rectangular- and tongue-shaped brooches as well as strap-ends (Figure 6.6).²⁵ The simplification in the design of the Mudford piece nonetheless raises the possibility that it was produced in England in an Anglo-Scandinavian



Figure 6.6. Tongue-shaped brooch from Eketorp, Sweden. (© Stockholm Historiska Museet)

setting, whereas the strap-end from Wharram Percy has a number of idiosyncratic details which point to Scandinavian manufacture.²⁶ The Mudford strap-end can be dated, on the basis of its style, from the late ninth to mid tenth century, a date that fits with the circulation of tongue-shaped strap-ends more generally.

A second strap-end from the South-West is an Anglo-Scandinavian product. The item, from St Leonards and St Ives, Dorset, is a fragment, missing its lower half (Figure 6.7).²⁷ Its butt-end is recessed on the back, with two misaligned rivet holes, one of which is incomplete due to fractures in the



Figure 6.7. Strap-end from St Leonards and St Ives, Dorset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

attachment plate. The decoration of the main face comprises a stylised en-face animal mask made up of two double-stranded volutes bound by a curved horizontal double band; this appears to generate two triangular ears above, and two rounded eyes below, a prominent brow. A vertical rib, effectively an extension of the volutes, seems to represent the 'nose' of the creature. It cuts a row of four pellets beneath the eyes and continues, forming two pellet-containing loops, after which point the strap-end breaks off.

This strap-end has exact parallels in two finds with similar breaks, from Swinhope, Lincolnshire²⁸ and a further find 'near Hornsea', East Yorkshire (not reported by the PAS), both of which are better preserved than the Dorset strap-end and confirm the layout of its zoomorphic ornament. The ornament is a devolved version of the Scandinavian Borre style, en-face masks with upright ears, beady eyes and curved horizontal brows forming key features of the Borre repertoire. On the basis of these parallels, it seems likely that the lower, missing half of the Dorset strap-end was rounded and carried a plaited, knotwork animal body. The arrangement of a dominant animal-head placed above a ring-knot body is found on mounts from Borre itself.²⁹ Significantly, such layouts are not seen on contemporary Anglo-Saxon strap-ends, on which animal bodies fill the main plate and animal-heads are reserved for the terminals.³⁰

The inspiration for the Dorset strap-end and its parallels is likely to have been tongue-shaped brooches from Scandinavia, as Caroline Paterson has similarly suggested for a related group of strap-ends, discussed below.³¹ In particular, the tongue-shaped brooch from Prestegården, Vestfold, Norway (Figure 6.3), shares with the group the composition of the en-face animal head below the butt-end, as well as the line of four pellets and vertical bars; on the brooch, these represent the neck of the creature and extend further to form a looping knotwork body on the brooch's lower half.³² The ornament on the Dorset strap-end is, however, considerably more stylised than its Scandinavian counterpart, this debasement indicating manufacture in an Anglo-Scandinavian or native Anglo-Saxon setting.

The ornament carried on these items is a variation of the decoration contained on a further group of Borre-style strap-ends with a mainly East Anglian distribution, which feature rows of stamped ring-dots on both the attachment and main plates, and which have a different animal-face composition.³³ The Borre-style ornament nonetheless links the two groups, as does their fragmentary condition, with strap-ends from both groups consistently revealing breaks half way along their length.³⁴ This latter feature suggests a shared inherent weakness in the mould or model used in the strap-ends' serial manufacture, and hints at a single place of manufacture for both strap-end varieties. The find locations of the counterparts for the Dorset strap-end, coupled with the East Anglian distribution of the related group, points to a workshop within the Danelaw. They make the Dorset example a clear outlier, perhaps lost by a traveller from the Danelaw or introduced to Dorset through trade during the late ninth or early tenth century.

Bullion

Silver and gold arm- and finger-rings comprise an altogether different category of Scandinavian

jewellery. Not only did they function as ornament in the traditional sense, that of display; they were also a convenient means of storing and carrying bullion, and could be cut up when necessary to generate payment. As such, they offer vital evidence not only for the presence of Scandinavian dress styles, but also for the operation of the Scandinavian bullion economy, in which weighed gold and silver was used as a means of exchange.³⁵

In general within the Scandinavian bullion economy, the degree to which silver and gold ornaments were fragmented varies, from items which are complete to those that are effectively hack metal, with the middle ground being occupied by proto-hack-silver: 'items of jewellery which are still complete, but which appear to have been deliberately twisted, flattened or bent in such a way that it is apparent that they were no longer thought of primarily as jewellery'.³⁶ This sliding scale in the 'bullionization' of jewellery is partially reflected in three finds of precious metal arm- and finger-rings from Wessex.³⁷

Rings

A near complete annular gold arm-ring, found in 1978 on a beach near Goodrington, Devon, is now in the British Museum.³⁸ It is formed of three plain rods twisted together. Its tapering ends are combined and wrapped in a faceted gold sheet, decorated on its three outer faces with ring-stamps. The ends were originally bound on either side by gold wire, but this survives on one side only. The loss of the wire may be the result of damage, for the ring is worn and its shape distorted, although the arm-ring could still have functioned as such. Alternatively, the ring may have been in a state of disassembly when lost or deposited. A couple of nicks – cuts or notches applied to the edge of an object with a knife to test the purity of the metal and/or expose plated forgeries – are also visible and are suggestive of some active use as bullion.

Simple, twisted rod arm-rings in silver and gold are a common feature of Viking Age Scandinavian hoards, with examples found in Britain likely,

in general, to have been either 'imported from Scandinavia or ... manufactured in Insular 'Viking' contexts'.³⁹ Gold rings with twisted tapering rods, bound by wire and joined to faceted knobs, offer especially close parallels to the Goodrington arm-ring: examples come from Hornelund, Denmark, and the High Street excavations, Dublin, with another, recent find from the York area.⁴⁰ The Dublin examples were excavated from late tenth- or early eleventh-century levels, but a recent reassessment of the chronology of twisted rod rings suggests that the type was in use from the second half of the ninth century.⁴¹ The Goodrington arm-ring may, then, have been associated with the activities of the Viking Great Army in the 870s, but a later date for its loss cannot be ruled out.

The findspot of the Goodrington arm-ring is outside the area normally associated with Viking activity. However, other Scandinavian gold rings are recorded from the south, including one further gold ring of possible early Viking Age date from Devon.⁴² This is an annular gold finger-ring, found in 1987 at Sandy Cove, to the east of Ladrán Bay near Sidmouth. It consists of four plain twisted rods, in two pairs, closed with a plain connecting band.⁴³

Twisted-rod finger rings in silver and in gold were widespread in the Viking Age, their form essentially representing a scaled down version of larger arm- and neck-rings. A gold finger-ring from an unknown context from the Isle of Skye likewise consists of four equally-sized rods.⁴⁴ Pairs of twisted rods twisted together also constitute a common form of neck-ring.⁴⁵ Finger-rings made of twisted rods were a long-lived artefact type and occur in both early and late Viking Age hoards.⁴⁶ The ring from Sidmouth is just as likely to date from the eleventh or twelfth centuries as it is to the late ninth or tenth.

The find places of these two gold rings, on or near beaches on the south coast, is of interest given that other single finds of Scandinavian gold ornaments likewise have an association with water or watery places. This has been observed within



Figure 6.8. Finger-ring found near Shaftesbury, Dorset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

Scandinavia, as well as in Ireland and Scotland.⁴⁷ Such a pattern may simply reflect the frequent use of coastal routes, but it is also possible that ornaments were deposited in watery places for votive or ritual purposes, without the intention of recovery. The possibility remains, however, that objects circulated as bullion prior to their deposition.

A further finger-ring, this time in silver, fits the definition given above of proto-hacksilver and thus links more firmly into the Scandinavian metal-weight economy. The ring, found near Shaftesbury, Dorset, comprises a thin strip of metal, bent roughly in half, with one tapering, rounded end and another square end, which may have been cut short (Figure 6.8).⁴⁸ Evidence for the use of this finger-ring as bullion is provided not just by its bent and possibly cut form, which indicates that it was no longer thought of as jewellery, but also by the presence of two nicks in the area of the fold.

The outer surface of the ring is decorated with two longitudinal rows of stamped apex-to-apex triangles on either side of a median incised line. The use of such stamped triangular decoration, either plain, as on the Shaftesbury ring, or, more commonly, filled with pellets, is ubiquitous on Viking Age silver, occurring on numerous finger-, arm- and neck-rings throughout the Scandinavian world.⁴⁹ Parallels for both the form and decoration of the ring are recorded from Scandinavia, for

instance, from Gotland,⁵⁰ as well as Scandinavian contexts in Britain, including the Cuerdale hoard.⁵¹ This later context fits with the suggestion by James Graham-Campbell that annular band finger-rings with stamped ornament were an early and short-lived type in Britain, predominantly dating from the late ninth to the early tenth century.⁵²

Foreign coin

Foreign silver coin such as Carolingian pennies and Arabic dirhams provided crucial fodder for the Scandinavian metal-weight economy. Within such a system, coins were valued purely for their metal content and were weighed out as bullion, rather than counted by tale. Consequently, they were often tested through bending and 'pecking' (the application of small knife cuts or stabs to the flat surface of a coin to test its fineness and/or expose plated or surface-enhanced forgeries), and deliberately fragmented to generate small sums of payment.⁵³ Arabic silver dirhams, imported to Scandinavia via Russia and the Baltic, occur in large numbers in Scandinavian Viking Age hoards: over 170,000 dirhams are recorded from Scandinavia, principally from Gotland. They are also present in Viking hoards from Britain, including Croydon, Surrey (deposited c.875), Cuerdale, Lancashire (c.905–10) and Goldsborough, Yorkshire (c.925), while a significant number of fragmentary dirhams are recorded from the 'productive' site of Torksey.⁵⁴ In England, around sixty-five dirhams have also been recorded as single finds, mainly, but not exclusively, from within the Danelaw.⁵⁵ It is evident from the mint date of these coins that dirhams continued to reach England as late as the 930s.

Two dirhams are recorded from Wessex. A dirham found in 1964 during excavations in Gar Street, Winchester, was originally published with a mint date of 898, but following a recent reassessment it may now be identified as an issue of the Samanid ruler Isma'il ibn Ahmad, minted in the east of the Islamic world, at Samarkand, in 905–6.⁵⁶ Factoring in a travelling time from the East of between ten and fifteen years, its earliest

possible loss date is *c.*915, but a coin of Edward the Elder dated to *c.*920 was found in an earlier stratigraphic layer than the dirham and thus indicates a later date for the dirham's loss, perhaps in the mid-to-late 920s or 930s.⁵⁷ A second dirham from Wessex, a recent metal-detector find from Monkton Deverill, Wiltshire, was struck in 802 for the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, possibly at Raay, Iran.⁵⁸ It probably circulated for a time in the East before being exported, first to Scandinavia and then to England. Only half survives, but the dirham is broken, rather than deliberately cut.⁵⁹

Although neither dirham displays signs of fragmentation, pecking or other forms of testing, there is no reason to doubt the status of these items as Viking bullion. Other dirhams have also been metal-detected from the south and west, providing a context for the Wessex finds.⁶⁰ The circumstances of the loss of the Wessex dirhams, especially that from Winchester at such a late date, can only be guessed at. Was the Winchester dirham dropped by a traveller from the Danelaw, or by a local merchant with Scandinavian connections? By the late ninth century, Winchester was a significant mint.⁶¹ It is perhaps more probable that the foreign coin, as illegal tender in Wessex, had been brought to the town for reminting.

Carolingian coins also appear in Viking Age hoards from Britain and single finds of similar type may be Viking losses.⁶² This is certainly true of coins with signs of treatment as bullion, such as a pecked denier of Charles the Bald (struck 843–77) from Thetford, Norfolk, and a cut half of a similar coin (struck 864–77), from Kelling, also in Norfolk.⁶³ The status of a handful of Carolingian pennies recorded as single finds from the south, without clear signs of treatment as bullion, is unclear, however.⁶⁴ Although by law, Carolingian coin ought not to have circulated within the realm of an English king,⁶⁵ there is growing evidence from the increasing number of single coins found through metal-detecting that Carolingian coins may have played a monetary role in the Anglo-



Figure 6.9. Silver ingot from Headbourne Worthy, Hampshire. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)



Figure 6.10. Silver ingot from Over Compton, Dorset. (Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum)

Saxon economy.⁶⁶ Moreover, as Joanna Story has highlighted, in England Carolingian silver coins (minted 750–900) tend to cluster along the south coast and in the east, regions with long-established trade connections with the Continent. Story thus concludes that, as a group, such coins, including finds from Wessex, are likely to have arrived as a result of direct commercial contact, independently of the Vikings.⁶⁷

Ingots

In the Scandinavian bullion economy cast bar ingots were a convenient means of storing and carrying silver. Although ingots are not confined to the Viking Age, examples from hoards of this date possess a number of distinctive features, which



Figure 6.11. Inset lead weight from Kingston, Dorset.
(© The Trustees of the British Museum)

can help to distinguish Viking-period ingots from earlier or later items. Such ingots are frequently cigar-shaped, for instance, with parallel sides, rounded ends and D-shaped, oval or rectangular sections. They also frequently display signs of hammering on one or more sides, testing 'nicks' along the edges and/or prominent grooves resulting from attempts to cut the ingot.⁶⁸

Two metal-detected silver ingots from Wessex are contenders for Viking Age pieces. Both ingots, from Headbourne Worthy, near Winchester, Hampshire (Figure 6.9), and Over Compton, Dorset (Figure 6.10), are roughly cigar-shaped, with sub-rectangular sections and rounded ends.⁶⁹ Pitting and other indentations observed on the lower surfaces and sides of both ingots result from casting in open sand moulds, and are typical of Viking Age pieces.⁷⁰ So too is the hammering on the Over Compton item: a treatment sometimes designed to prepare the surface for cutting and nicking, and at other times to prepare the ingot for fashioning into jewellery.⁷¹ Hammering is not, however, confined to Viking Age examples, as ingots from Roman and Migration Period hoards show similar hammer marks.⁷²

When found in silver hoards alongside hack-silver and imported coin, ingots can usually be assumed to have an economic character, but single

finds may have possessed other functions, such as providing the raw material for metalworking or minting. The intended function of single finds of ingots can be difficult to determine, particularly for the two ingots discussed here, both of which are complete and neither of which carry test marks indicative of active use as bullion, despite being extensively hammered (in one case).

It is nevertheless worth noting that both ingots from Wessex have regular shapes, with parallel sides and rounded ends. Such regular forms are typical of ingots from hack-silver hoards, which can be presumed to have an economic function, but would not have been necessary if the ingot were to be used in metalworking. Indeed, it has been observed that ingots associated with workshop areas on Scandinavian sites sometimes have irregular shapes and cross-sections, although a regular shape does not preclude the use of an ingot in manufacturing.⁷³ The silver content of the two Wessex ingots (86 and 96 per cent) is broadly in line with that observed among ingots in Viking Age hoards from Britain, while there are some grounds for arguing that the weight of the Headbourne Worthy ingot, at 12.9 g, represents an approximate correlation with a half-unit of the Scandinavian öre-weight (ounce) of c.24–26 g.⁷⁴ It thus seems likely that these items had a bullion function, even if it cannot be proved.

Weights

Critical to the weighing-out of bullion were balances and weights, and three weights of Viking type are known from Wessex. All three are decorated lead weights with metalwork inset at the top. This is a fairly common Viking type, usually involving Insular metalwork but sometimes incorporating Scandinavian items and even re-used coins.⁷⁵ The type is typically associated with the weighing out of bullion: examples have been found with hand-held balances in Viking Age graves, and at market places and urban sites in presumed commercial contexts.⁷⁶ Examples are known within Scandinavia from both settlement sites and graves, but they are less common here than in Britain.⁷⁷ This factor,

coupled with the weights' predominant use of Insular metalwork, strongly suggests that the type originated in an Insular context.

Two lead weights found near Kingston, Dorset, are characterised by their use of recycled coin. The first has a base-silver Lunette posthumous issue of Æthelred I (865–71) pinned to its top (Figure 6.11), while the second (not pictured) carries an impression of the same coin type, issued by Alfred (871–99) of Wessex.⁷⁸ Although not found together, the weights are likely to have constituted, or formed part of, a set, since both coin types belong to a rare Lunette variety, dated to *c.*873–4 and probably minted in Mercia.⁷⁹

The combination of this mint date and place is of interest because the Viking army is known to have overwintered in Mercia in the early 870s, at Repton, Derbyshire, and Torksey, Lincolnshire, prior to entering Wessex. The Kingston weights were found five miles southeast of Wareham, the location of a Viking winter base in 875–6. As Marion Archibald has suggested 'the Kingston weights were probably made at one of the Viking bases in north-east Mercia and brought by the raiders to Kingston'.⁸⁰ Archibald envisages such weights being used together with hand-held balances in small-scale transactions, such as the division of ransom payment between members of the *micel here*.

In this context, it is interesting to note an antiquarian find of a hand-held balance arm with distinctive ring-stamped ornament, from Marlborough, Wiltshire.⁸¹ The arm was published as Roman, but its form and decoration is paralleled on Viking-period balances, including an example from Akershus, Norway, and a recent find from the Anglo-Scandinavian site of Cottam on the Yorkshire Wolds.⁸² A date in the ninth or tenth century is therefore possible for the piece.

Lead weights incorporating Insular, often Irish, metalwork, are the commonest group of Scandinavian decorated lead weight. They are found in substantial numbers in the Danelaw, and are also on record from the South-West.



Figure 6.12. Enamel offcut from Winterbourne Zelston, Dorset. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

A lead weight capped with a diamond-shaped stud of Irish workmanship was found in 2002 in Ilchester, Somerset.⁸³ It carries a geometric design of a central lozenge and two V-shaped fields, all inlaid with yellow enamel. To either side of the central lozenge are three linear recesses; although currently empty, these are likely to have originally contained enamel. Typically for weights of this type, the lead was shaped to fit the stud, although subsequently much has been lost, exposing the rectangular rivet with which the stud was attached. The original function of the stud is unclear, but the use of yellow enamel in angular fields is characteristic of Irish metalworking and dates the piece (but not necessarily the weight) to the eighth or ninth century.⁸⁴ A second enamel offcut from Wessex, a disc with yellow enamel set in a mock interlocking pattern, comes from Winterborne Zelston, Dorset, and may have also been intended as a weight (Figure 6.12).⁸⁵ It is similar to several re-used enamelled discs in Scandinavia, but, in this case, no lead survives.⁸⁶

The precise function of metalwork insets in lead weights is unclear.⁸⁷ One possibility is that they served to personalise weights, allowing the owner to easily recognise their set in a trading environment where multiple sets of weights were in use; the advantage being that the owner trusted his or her own set, and could thus guard against fraud in a transaction. The discovery of multiple weights in graves, for instance, in the Scandinavian



Figure 6.13. Carolingian sword belt mount from Wareham, Dorset. (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

boat-burial from Kiloran Bay, Colonsay, supports the idea of individual ownership of weight sets.⁸⁸ It may seem odd that bullion weights could incorporate metal fragments of varying size and weight whilst maintaining a weight standard, but in most cases the metal fragments will have contributed only slightly to the overall mass of the weight. Moreover, since the lead was usually shaped to fit the mount, it is clear that weights were fashioned with specific metalwork pieces in mind. Analysis of several decorated lead weights – from both Britain and Scandinavia – indicates a broad correlation with fractions and multiples of a Scandinavian öre weight between 24 and 26.6 g.⁸⁹ The same may be proposed for the weights from Kingston (the Ilchester weight has lost much of its lead so is not suitable for analysis). Weighing 99.97 g and 71.44 g, these may have had target weights of 100 g and 75 g, suggesting the use of multiples of a Scandinavian öre weight of *c.*25 g.⁹⁰

Insular and Continental Metalwork

The Insular metalwork discussed above in the context of the decorated weights introduces the third and final category of metalwork for discussion: single items of Insular and Continental metalwork, which are likely to have circulated in Wessex as Viking loot. Insular and Continental

metalwork forms a relatively common component of Scandinavian precious-metal hoards and grave finds, in which it often appears in a reworked state as female brooches.⁹¹ The items' status as loot cannot be proven – some items may have been acquired through tribute, for instance, or legitimate trade. Nevertheless, the date and function of the metalwork, together with its pattern of re-use, points to it having been obtained during Viking raids on the west coast of Scotland, Ireland and the Continent in the eighth and ninth centuries.

The circulation of Continental and Insular metalwork in England is attested by a growing corpus of harness, belt and baldric fittings, some found in Scandinavian contexts and others as context-less single finds.⁹² For Carolingian metalwork, the distribution is concentrated in the Danelaw,⁹³ but there is one item from Wessex: a square silver-gilt sword-belt mount with florid acanthus decoration, found near Wareham, Dorset (Figure 6.13).⁹⁴ The mount has a raised outer frame and sunken inner border of moulded acanthus plumes. This surrounds a central domed square decorated with a saltire cross with expanding arms; the fields generated by the cross are decorated with acanthus tufts, while in the centre is a framed quatrefoil. The square shape of the mount is unusual in the context of Carolingian sword belt fittings, other mounts usually being rectangular in form, but the saltire cross, sunken field of acanthus and isolated acanthus tufts are all characteristic of opulent Carolingian metalwork of the mid-to-late ninth century.⁹⁵

The Wareham mount would have originally been attached to a sword belt or *cingulum militae*, a key component of the Carolingian 'military look', to adopt Egon Wamers' terminology, which documentary and pictorial evidence suggests was an important marker of elite status in the Carolingian world.⁹⁶ Military regalia were a prime target of Viking raiding, as attested by the presence of comparable sword- and belt-mounts and harness fittings in Scandinavian precious-metal hoard and grave finds.⁹⁷ The Wareham mount shows

no physical signs of reworking, but it has been separated from its set, suggesting second-hand use. The mount may have arrived in England independently of the Vikings, but, given its find location, it is perhaps more likely that its loss was connected with the Viking army's overwintering at Wareham in 875–6.

In Wessex, single finds of Irish metalwork are more plentiful. A copper-alloy suspension mount designed for attachment to an Irish hanging-bowl was found in Urchfont, Wiltshire, in 2007.⁹⁸ It carries two opposed stylised bearded heads and has a stepped cavity on the reverse to accommodate a suspension cord.⁹⁹ The Wiltshire mount relates to a series of anthropomorphic hanging-bowl hook mounts known from Norwegian Viking Age graves, including a famous example from the early ninth-century grave from Myklebostad, Sogne og Fjordane, suggesting a date of production for the Wiltshire find in the late eighth or ninth century.¹⁰⁰

A copper-alloy mount, found in 2011 in Ashburton, Devon, is one of three bridle mounts of Irish manufacture from Wessex (Figure 6.14).¹⁰¹ The mount is cruciform-shaped with two incomplete upper projections of unequal length, two truncated (cut) side arms, and a third, complete lower knop. No exact parallels for this form are known, but comparisons with complete mounts of related type indicate that the two uppermost projections would have originally formed a semi-circular recess, enabling the mount to interlock with other, semi-circular shaped terminals.¹⁰² The arms of the Ashburton mount are filled with chip-carved interlace while in the centre is a triskele motif. These are characteristic features of mounts of this general type and date the Ashburton piece stylistically to the eighth and early ninth centuries.¹⁰³ Two further cruciform-shaped mounts of the same general type are known: one from Shilvinghampton, near Weymouth, Dorset, and another of uncertain, but possibly local, provenance in the collection of Broad Hinton School, Wiltshire. Both have been previously published elsewhere.¹⁰⁴



Figure 6.14. Bridle mount from Ashburton, Devon. (Image courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)

Mounts such as these were originally worn in sets to cover the strap-unions of horse bridles, and are found in association with equestrian fittings and horse skeletal remains in Viking burials in both Ireland and Norway.¹⁰⁵ Individual examples are also known from Viking Age contexts in Britain and Scandinavia, and as single finds without archaeological contexts.¹⁰⁶ Notably, while these individual items were manufactured as bridle mounts, many show signs of re-use as brooches or other objects.¹⁰⁷ This is the case with one of the previously published Wessex pieces, from the Broad Hinton School collection: its four integral lugs have been filed down and it has two, additional rivet holes. Other items, including the Ashburton mount, occupy an intermediary stage, having been separated from their set but not yet adapted for alternative use.

Although not made of precious metal, these mounts are highly decorative and were evidently much prized by Scandinavians. The reason for their popularity is a matter of speculation. As probable items of loot, they may have made symbolic reference to Scandinavian expansion in the West, serving to associate their owners with the prestige, wealth and alliances entailed in Insular and Continental connections. The owners of such

items need not have been directly involved in raiding, however. The widespread distribution of finds, in both Britain and Scandinavia, suggests that comparable material was widely available, signalling an intensive second-hand trade in looted material in the wake of Viking raids.¹⁰⁸ This is supported by the discovery of such material at prominent Scandinavian market sites, including Kaupang, Norway, and Birka, Sweden, as well as by the fragmentary metalwork and offcuts, including enamels and bridle mounts, found along with Scandinavian-type silver in the River Blackwater at Shanmullagh, Ireland.¹⁰⁹ This latter assemblage, possibly the spoil of a raid on the nearby Armagh monastery in 895, has been interpreted as the 'stock-in-trade of a Hiberno-Viking metal-worker'. It may have been en route to a market place in Scandinavia or the Danelaw when the owner 'met with a misadventure on the river'.¹¹⁰

Discussion

This survey has demonstrated that Scandinavian cultural artefacts are not confined to areas of documented Scandinavian settlement in England, but can be found deep in the heart of 'English' England. While the finds are not sufficiently numerous to suggest local Scandinavian settlement, they nevertheless demonstrate connections with material from both Scandinavia and the Danelaw. What, then, is the likely historical context of the metalwork? Assuming that the metalwork was not produced locally, can we identify the mechanisms by which it was brought to Wessex or the circumstances of its loss or deposition?

In order to contextualise the artefacts it is first necessary to consider both when and where they were deposited. In practice, however, the close dating of the metalwork is rarely possible. Just one item, the Arabic dirham from Winchester, minted in 905/6, comes from a stratified archaeological context indicating a date of deposition some time after *c.*920. Clearly, this dirham reached Wessex well after the main period of Viking activity in

the 870s. Otherwise, the artefacts are only broadly datable on stylistic grounds to the late ninth or tenth century, and some of the precious-metal rings may well date to a later period.

However, although it cannot be proved, there are both typological and historical grounds for linking the loss of the two Kingston weights, and arguably the Carolingian mount, to the presence of the Viking army at Wareham in 875/6. In addition, it seems likely that artefacts identified as carrying debased Scandinavian designs, such as the strap-end from St Leonards and St Ives, Dorset, are tenth-, rather than ninth-century, products (assuming that debasement took place only after Scandinavian styles took root in England). Based on its band-ring form, the finger-ring found near Shaftesbury is more closely dateable to the late ninth or early tenth century. Yet, as with other artefacts, the length of time for which it remained in use – its 'lifespan' – is unknown. Certainly, signs of re-use observed on the trefoil brooch from Longbridge Deverill serve as a reminder that some artefacts may have circulated for an extended period of time in Wessex, beyond their period of currency in the Scandinavian homelands. Such extended 'lifespans', involving the secondary re-use of an object, have also been identified among Scandinavian jewellery finds in the Danelaw.¹¹¹ In sum, the metalwork appears to span a broad period, stretching from the late ninth to the third decade of the tenth century, and perhaps beyond.

Figure 6.15 reveals the distribution of Scandinavian-type metalwork from Wessex. As with any map generated by small finds of metalwork, it must be handled with care. Items such as brooches and ingots are highly portable, and could thus have travelled some distance from their original place of use. Moreover, the total tally of such items is small, meaning that future discoveries have the potential to alter the existing map significantly. The prominence of metal detector finds among the material also introduces distributional biases. One means of controlling for such biases is to compare the distribution

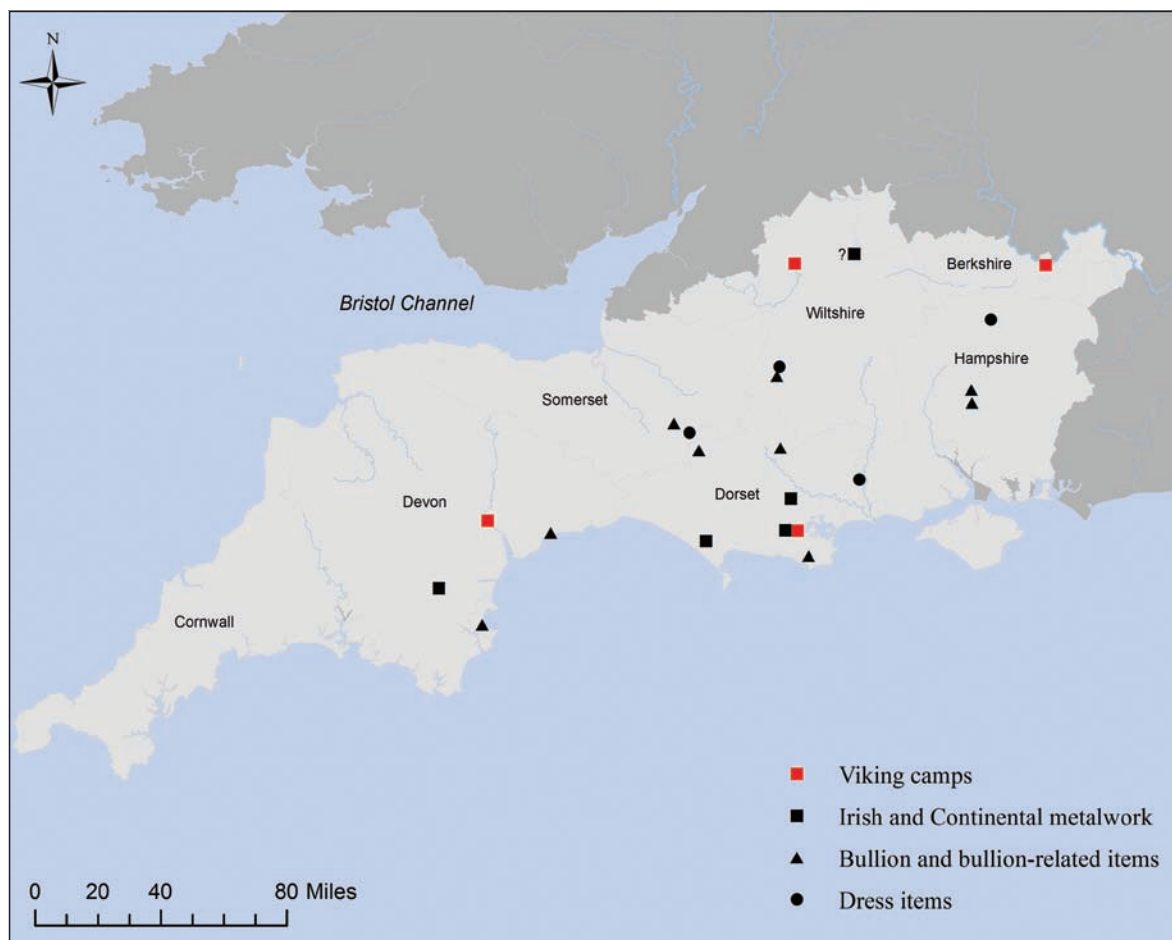


Figure 6.15. *Distribution of Scandinavian-type metalwork in Wessex.* (© Jane Kershaw)

of Scandinavian-type metalwork against known constraints on metal detecting (Figure 6.16). The background spread of all early medieval metalwork recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme also acts as a control on the current distribution (Figure 6.16).

Viking-related metalwork from the south is currently focused in Dorset, Hampshire and southern Wiltshire and Somerset (Figure 6.15). The mount from Ashburton, Devon, is the most westerly find, with no artefacts currently known from Cornwall or Berkshire, although an old find of a sword with Scandinavian ornament, found

in a burial in Reading, has been noted above.¹¹² The absence of new material from Berkshire is unexpected. This region was the focus of Scandinavian military activity in 870/1, and has produced large numbers of other types of early medieval find (Figure 6.16). On the other hand, the scarcity of more westerly finds, in Cornwall, is mirrored on the early medieval control map (Figure 6.16). This would seem to suggest genuine limits to the extent of contemporary settlement.

Viking Age metalwork is also absent along the north Devon and Somerset coasts, bordering the Bristol Channel, an absence not observed on the

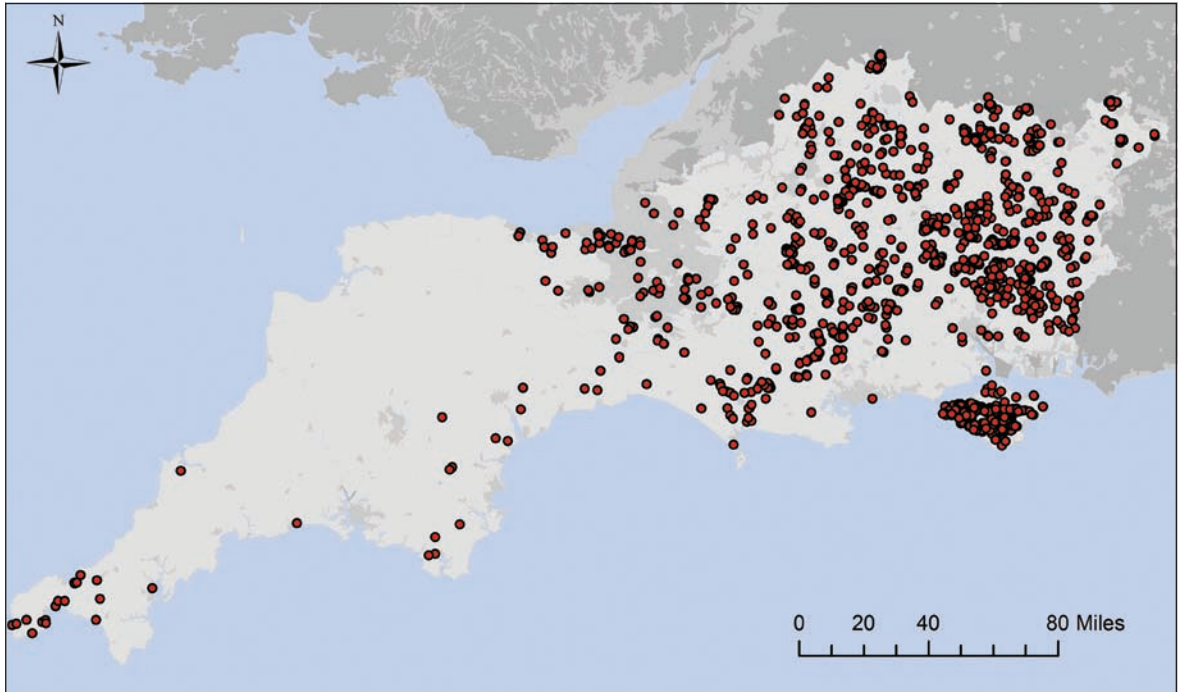


Figure 6.16. All early medieval metalwork from the south-west recorded by the PAS, shown against modern constraints on metal-detecting (urban centres and high land greater than 300 m above sea level). Area outside Wessex = dark grey. (© Jane Kershaw)

control map. Given written evidence for occasional Viking raiding and inland incursions along this stretch of coastline in the first half of the ninth and early tenth century, this pattern is surprising. However, the Somerset finds from Mudford and Ilchester are located near the River Yeo, a tributary of the River Parrett, which leads out to the Bristol Channel. Channels of import via this route may, then, be better attested than a cursory glance at the map suggests. Looking further south, the south coasts of Devon and Dorset are comparatively well represented by the Scandinavian-style material, mainly by finds of recycled Irish metalwork and Scandinavian arm-rings. As noted above, the association of the rings with the south coast may point to their ritual deposition in 'watery places', but it is equally possible that they were lost during one of the many Viking seaborne raids on Wessex.

Significantly, the metalwork under discussion does not appear to show a relationship to the documented military bases of the 870s: Reading, Wareham, Exeter and Chippenham, although the finds do concentrate in a middle zone between the camps in which the Viking army can be expected to have travelled and raided. The exception to this pattern is a cluster of finds around Wareham, comprising the two weights from Kingston, the Carolingian mount, and the Irish offcut from Winterborne Zelston. A connection between these artefacts and Wareham can be neither proved nor disproved. It is nevertheless worth noting that detector finds from ninth-century Viking camps in the north of England, namely Torksey, Lincolnshire, and a site known in modern literature only as 'A Riverine Site near York' (ARSNY), indicate that such sites could fulfil a range of

defensive, commercial and craft functions, and could be extremely large in size.¹¹³ Significantly, all the items clustered around Wareham fall within the artefact range represented at these other, ninth-century Viking bases, strengthening the likelihood that this small group of finds is indeed connected to Wareham. One final observation is the close proximity of the Arabic dirham from Monkton Deverill and the trefoil brooch from Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire. Monkton and Longbridge Deverill were situated along an ancient routeway, leading from Poole Harbour northwards towards Chippenham, where the Vikings camped immediately prior to the Battle of Edington in 878. The items were found just over half a mile apart, and may be connected with a single event.

The broad patterns to emerge from the dating and distribution evidence suggest the need for a nuanced view of the Viking presence in Wessex, spread over an extended period. Particularly perplexing is the evidence for bullion. The northern Viking camps of Torksey and ARSNY have yielded similar finds of ingots, weights and Arabic dirhams, indicating the practice of a metal-weight economy by Scandinavian war-bands in the 870s. They point to this decade as the likely period of use for the bullion-related material from Wessex. And yet, the dirham from Winchester is securely dated to a later period, while the dating of many of the other bullion artefacts remains imprecise. Since bullion is a footprint of Viking trading activity, its presence in tenth-century Wessex provokes questions about the economic relationship between the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon populations: did local inhabitants in Wessex have an established trading relationship with Scandinavian communities, either in the Danelaw, or abroad? Could they have adopted bullion as a means of exchange, despite their traditions of coin use? Such questions are difficult to answer on the basis of current evidence, but demonstrate the importance of small finds for creating a fresh perspective on Wessex's First Viking Age.

Conclusion

Thanks to the recovery and reporting of large numbers of metal detector finds, there is now a significant and accessible body of Viking Age metalwork from Wessex. It is hoped that this chapter has enhanced understanding of the corpus as it currently stands. The metalwork shows connections with material from the Scandinavian homelands as well as the Danelaw. It indicates that an area of England usually considered immune from Scandinavian influence was, in fact, in receipt of a wide spectrum of Scandinavian cultural artefacts, ranging from belt fittings to silver ingots.

The interpretation of the material is complicated by a lack of contextual evidence relating to its use and deposition, as well as its heterogeneous nature. Arguably, the finds are not sufficiently numerous to be used as an indicator of Scandinavian settlement; a suggestion supported by the fact that just one female brooch has been recorded in Wessex, compared to hundreds from the Danelaw. A case may be made for the association of select items with the itinerary of the Great Army in the 870s; indeed, in light of new information about Viking bases in northern England, the artefact imprint of the camps in the south could be usefully explored in future research. The important finding to emerge from this chapter is that Scandinavian cultural artefacts spread into Wessex, in a way that is not yet clearly consistent with the historical record.

Notes

1. P. Sawyer, 'The Two Viking Ages of Britain', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 2 (1969), pp. 163–76 and 203–207, at p. 163.
2. R. Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998), pp. 194–207. See further discussion in J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Landscapes of Violence in Early Medieval Wessex: Towards a Reassessment of Anglo-Saxon Strategic Landscapes', above, pp. 72–86.
3. In 1995, Barbara Yorke stated that 'direct evidence for the Viking presence in ninth-century Wessex is slight': *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), p. 113. The existing data comprises a small

- group of 'pagan Scandinavian' burials from Reading, Berkshire, one of which contains a sword with Scandinavian ornament, and a coin-hoard deposit, also from Reading, which may or may not be linked with the activities of the Great Army there in 870/1 (N. Brooks and J. Graham-Campbell, 'Reflections on the Viking-Age Silver Hoard from Croydon, Surrey', in N. Brooks, *Communities and Warfare, 700–1400* (London, 2000), pp. 69–92, at p. 89; K. East, 'A Lead Model and a Rediscovered Sword, both with Gripping Beast Decoration', *Medieval Archaeology* 30 (1986), pp. 1–7, at pp. 2–6, fig. 2, pl. ii). In addition, a stone cross from Cardinham, Cornwall, carries an Insular version of the Scandinavian ring-chain motif, otherwise found principally in the Isle of Man and north-west England, including on the famous Gosforth cross, Cumbria (P. M. C. Kermodé, *Manx Crosses: or, The Inscribed and Sculptured Monuments of the Isle of Man from about the End of the Fifth to the Beginning of the Thirteenth century* (London, 1907), fig. 28, no. 6). Other attempts to identify direct ninth- or tenth-century Scandinavian influence in local stone sculpture have been rejected by modern scholarship.
4. For a full account, see Yorke, *Wessex*, pp. 107–12; see also D. Gore, 'A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses'; above, pp. 56–69.
 5. The regulation of trade between English and Danish-settled territories is specifically mentioned in a peace treaty drawn up between King Alfred and the Viking leader Guthrum in the 880s (P. Kershaw, 'The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty: Scripting Accommodation and Interaction in Viking-Age England', in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 43–64, at p. 54). This regulation involved the exchange of hostages as 'peace pledges' – further potential conduits of metalwork into Wessex.
 6. I am grateful to Barbara Yorke for this suggestion.
 7. J. F. Kershaw, 'Culture and Gender in the Danelaw: Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian Brooches', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 5 (2009), pp. 295–325; *Viking Identities: Scandinavian Jewellery in England* (Oxford, 2013).
 8. PAS Find-ID WILT-9A5AE7. It has been proposed that a bronze sheet fragment from a burial on Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel represents the remains of a Scandinavian oval brooch, but the size and shape of the fragment does not support this attribution (K. S. Gardner and M. Ternstrom, 'The Giants Graves: A Nineteenth-Century Discovery of Human Remains on the Island of Lundy', *The Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and the Arts Report and Transactions* 129 (1997), pp. 51–77, fig. 6).
 9. Kershaw, 'Culture and Gender in the Danelaw', pp. 300–301; *Viking Identities*, pp. 24–5.
 10. B. Maixner, *Die Gegossenen Kleeblattförmigen Fibeln der Wikingerzeit aus Skandinavien* (Bonn, 2005), cat. nos 400–2, pls 12, Z 1.2 and 49.6–8, map 26.
 11. Maixner, *Die Gegossenen Kleeblattförmigen Fibeln der Wikingerzeit*, cat. no. 75.
 12. Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, Table 3.6.
 13. PAS Find-ID BERK-CD5492.
 14. Two Hiberno-Norse ringed pins are on record from the south, from Wooton Creek, Isle of Wight, and Week St Mary, Cornwall. However, both types are firmly dated to the late tenth to eleventh centuries, and thus belong to the Second Viking Age. T. Fanning, *Viking Age Ringed Pins from Dublin* (Dublin, 1994), pp. 41 and 46.
 15. PAS Find-ID HAMP-767FD8.
 16. E. Wamers, 'Continental and Insular Metalwork', in *Things from the Town: Artefacts and Inhabitants in Viking-Age Kaupang*, ed. D. Skre, Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series 3 (Oslo, 2011), pp. 65–97 and 72–73.
 17. A. R. Goodall and C. Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects' in *The South Manor Area, Wharham: A Study of Settlement on the Yorkshire Wolds* 8, ed. P. A. Stamper and R. A. Croft (York, 2000), pp. 126–31, at p. 131; see, for instance, J. Brøndsted, 'Danish Inhumation Graves of the Viking Age', *Acta Archaeologica* 7 (1936), pp. 81–228, at p. 179, fig. 87, b; D. M. Wilson and O. Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art* (London, 1966), pl. XXIX; J. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Artefacts*, British Museum Publications (London, 1980), no. 189.
 18. E. Wamers, 'Eine Zungenfibel aus dem Hafen von Haithabu', in *Das archäologische Fundmaterial IV*, ed. H. Drescher, G. Grenader-Nyberg, H. J. Hundt, G. H. Lawson and E. Wamers, *Berichte über die Ausgrabungen in Haithabu* 19 (Neumünster, 1984), pp. 63–127, fig. 11, 1.
 19. Brøndsted, 'Danish Inhumation Graves of the Viking Age', p. 179, fig. 87; Goodall and Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects', pp. 128–29, no. 23, pl. 11.
 20. Goodall and Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects', p. 128. A notable exception is the pair of silver strap-ends 'without parallel in England', though of probable Carolingian origin, from the Trewhiddle

- hoard, Cornwall: D. M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork, 700–1100, in the British Museum* (London, 1964), p. 98.
21. Goodall and Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects', pp. 128–31, no. 22, pl. 11.
 22. PAS Find-ID SOM-9ABAE0.
 23. Cf. D. Hinton, 'Relief-decorated Strap-ends', in *Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester*, ed. M. Biddle, Winchester Studies 7.2 (Oxford, 2 parts, 1990), Part 1, pp. 494–500, at p. 498, no. 1057.
 24. G. Thomas, *Late Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age Strap-Ends 750–1100, Part II*, The Finds Research Group 700–1700 Datasheet 32 (2004).
 25. Wamers, 'Eine Zungenfibel aus dem Hafen von Haithabu', fig. 14.1, see also figs 11.2, 12 and 13.1.
 26. Goodall and Paterson, 'Non-ferrous Metal Objects', pp. 129–30.
 27. PAS Find-ID HAMP-2D60A0.
 28. PAS Find-ID NLM-66E451.
 29. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, Pl. 27, d, i.
 30. C. Paterson, 'Viking Strap-Ends with a Difference', *The Quarterly*, Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Research Group, no. 37 (2000), pp. 3–7, at p. 6.
 31. Paterson 'Viking Strap-Ends with a Difference'.
 32. Wamers, 'Eine Zungenfibel aus dem Hafen von Haithabu', pp. 81–82, at p. 119, fig. 11, 1.
 33. Thomas, *Late Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age Strap-Ends 750–1100, Part II*, p. 2; Paterson, 'Viking Strap-Ends with a Difference'.
 34. Paterson, 'Viking Strap-Ends with a Difference', p. 4.
 35. It is important to note that the Anglo-Saxons also wore precious metal finger- and arm-rings. In contemporary wills, arm-rings are sometimes valued by weight; they are also mentioned as a form of payment in several ninth-century charters, raising the possibility that they too had a function as units of bullion, in addition to ornament (D. Hinton, 'Late Saxon Treasure and Bullion', in *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed. D. Hill, BAR British Ser. 59 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 135–53; A. Williams, *The World before Domesday. The English Aristocracy, 900–1066* (London, 2008), pp. 113–16). However, such rings (which are typologically distinct from Scandinavian forms) were not fragmented to provide payment. Nor were they tested for their metal content or made to standardized weights to facilitate their use as currency: their potential role as bullion can thus be considered distinct from that of Scandinavian objects.
 36. G. Williams, 'Hoards from the Northern Danelaw from Cuerdale to the Vale of York', in *The Huxley Hoard: Scandinavian Settlement in the North West*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell and R. Philpott (Liverpool, 2009), pp. 73–83, at p. 76.
 37. Two plaited gold finger-rings are also known from the South-West, from Soberton and Wonston, Hampshire. However, plaited rings are more commonly dated to the eleventh century and the objects thus fall outside the scope of this chapter (J. Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard and Related Viking-Age Silver and Gold from Britain and Ireland in the British Museum* (London, 2011), cat. no. 7:1; PAS Find-ID SUR-2953A2). In addition, there is a silver twisted-rod arm-ring with spade-shaped terminals, from Christchurch, Hampshire: D. Allen, 'A Twist in the Tale', *Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society Section Newsletters* 16 (1991), p. 16, with drawing. This arm-ring was published as Scandinavian, but the terminals are not paralleled among Scandinavian finds, and an Anglo-Saxon origin cannot be ruled out (cf. the Anglo-Saxon silver arm-ring with a ball-shaped terminal from Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire, Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 101; D. Hinton, *The Alfred Jewel and other Late Anglo-Saxon Decorated Metalwork* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 49–50). I am grateful to James Graham-Campbell for this suggestion.
 38. Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, cat. no. 19, pl. 79, no. 19.
 39. Note, however, the Anglo-Saxon origins of a silver arm-ring from Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire. Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 100–102 (quotation at p. 101).
 40. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Artefacts*, no. 223; *Viking and Medieval Dublin*. Catalogue of an Exhibition of National Museum Excavations, 1962–73 (Dublin, 1973), p. 24, pl. 17; *Treasure Annual Report 2004* (London, 2007), no. 76.
 41. Graham-Campbell, J. 2006, 'The Rings', in *The Hoen Hoard: a Viking Gold Treasure of the Ninth Century*, ed. S. H. Fuglesang and D. M. Wilson, Acta archaeologica et artium historiae pertinentia 14 (Rome/Oslo, 2006), pp. 73–81, at pp. 75–76.
 42. H. Shetelig (ed.), *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, Part 4 (Oslo, 1940), p. 29.
 43. James Graham-Campbell, pers. comm.
 44. J. Graham-Campbell, *The Viking-Age Gold and Silver of Scotland (AD 850–1100)* (Edinburgh, 1995), p. 159, S13, Pl. 73, f.
 45. B. Hårdh, *Silver in the Viking Age. A Regional-Economic Study*, Acta Archaeologica Lundensia, Series in 8°, no. 25 (Stockholm, 1996), pp. 55–56, table 7, fig. 14, III.

46. J. Graham-Campbell, 'The Gold Finger-Ring from a Burial in St. Aldate's Street, Oxford', *Oxoniensia* 53 (1988), pp. 263–66, at p. 264.
47. Hårdh, *Silver in the Viking Age. A Regional-Economic Study*, p. 134; J. Graham-Campbell and J. Sheehan, 'Viking-Age Gold and Silver from Irish Crannogs and other Watery Places', *Journal of Irish Archaeology* 18 (2009), pp. 77–93; Graham-Campbell, *Viking-Age Gold and Silver of Scotland*, p. 164, S24, pl. 72, c–d.
48. B. Ager, 'Potential Find of Treasure: Fragment of Viking Silver Finger-ring from the Shaftesbury Area, Dorset' (unpublished report for HM Coroner, 2010); cf. M. Stenberger, *Die Schatzfunde Gotlands der Wikingerzeit*, Vol. 1 (Stockholm, 1947), fig. 38, no. 6.
49. Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 146; *Viking-Age Gold and Silver of Scotland*, p. 58, fig. 28, nos 28–30 and 36–38.
50. Stenberger, *Die Schatzfunde Gotlands der Wikingerzeit*, Vol. 1, figs 38, no. 6; 39, no. 2; and 87.
51. Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, pl. 44, 1:985.
52. Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 106.
53. M. M. Archibald, 'Testing', in Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 51–64.
54. M. A. S. Blackburn, 'The Viking Winter Camp at Torksey, 872–3', in M. A. S. Blackburn, *Viking Coinage and Currency in the British Isles*, British Numismatic Society, Special Publication 7 (London, 2011), pp. 221–54, at pp. 229–30, Appendix 2.
55. R. Naismith, 'Islamic Coins from Early Medieval England', *Numismatic Chronicle* 165 (2005), pp. 193–222; H. M. Brown and R. Naismith, 'Kufic Coin', in *The Winchester Mint: and Coins and Related Finds from the Excavations of 1961–71*, ed. M. Biddle, Winchester Studies 8 (Oxford, 2012), pp. 695–98, note 3.
56. M. Biddle, 'Excavations at Winchester 1964. Third Interim Report', *Antiquaries Journal* 45 (1965), pp. 230–64, at p. 242; Brown and Naismith, 'Kufic Coin'.
57. Biddle, 'Excavations at Winchester 1964', p. 242; G. Williams, 'The Cuerdale Coins', in Graham-Campbell, *Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 39–71, at p. 66.
58. *Coin Register 2000*, The British Numismatic Society Journal 71 (2001), pp. 154–68, no. 90.
59. A third dirham from the South-West, Cerne Abbas, Dorset, is included in a map of dirhams and Viking weights from England in a recent article by Julian Richards and John Naylor: 'The Metal Detector and the Viking Age in England', in *The Viking Age: Ireland and the West. Proceedings of the 15th Viking Congress*, ed. D. O'Corrain and J. Sheehan (Cork, 2010), pp. 338–52, fig. 32.3. However, this coin was struck in Al-Andalus in 999/1000 and is thus not associated with the First Viking Age (R. H. M. Dolley, 'A Spanish Dirham found in England', *Numismatic Chronicle* 17 (1957), pp. 242–44).
60. See, for instance, the deliberately cut dirhams from Claverley, Shropshire, and Tetsworth, Oxfordshire, PAS Find-ID HESH-18E881 and WILT-1110F3.
61. S. Lyon, 'Minting in Winchester: An Introduction and Statistical Analysis', in *The Winchester Mint*, ed. Biddle, pp. 3–55, at p. 3.
62. M. A. S. Blackburn, 'Expansion and Control: Aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian Minting South of the Humber', in *Vikings and the Danelaw: Selected Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress, Nottingham and York, 21–30 August 1997*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell, R. Hall, J. Jesch and D. N. Parsons (Oxford, 2001), pp. 125–42, at p. 134.
63. EMC 1984.0022; 1997.0104.
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 113. The sizes of Torksey and 'A Riverine Site near York' have been estimated at 26 ha (65 acres) and 31 ha (76 acres) respectively (Blackburn, 'Viking Winter Camp at Torksey', p. 245; Gareth Williams, pers. comm.).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Death on the Dorset Ridgeway: The Discovery and Excavation of an Early Medieval Mass Burial

Angela Boyle

This chapter focuses on the discovery and excavation of a mass burial at Ridgeway Hill, Dorset, which contained the remains of approximately fifty-one decapitated individuals of late tenth- or early eleventh-century date. The feature was discovered during an archaeological watching brief which formed part of the archaeological works for the new Weymouth Relief Road. The excavation of the mass burial was carried out by Oxford Archaeology between June and August 2009 on behalf of Skanska Civil Engineering and Dorset County Council. Although the results of detailed post-excavation analysis are presented in an Oxford Archaeology monograph on the site, what follows is a summary of the results of the preliminary assessment of this exceptional skeletal assemblage and its possible contemporary context.¹

The Site and its Excavation

Circumstance of discovery

The mass burial was discovered during archaeological works in advance of the construction of the Weymouth Relief Road prior to the 2012 London Olympics. The scheme was intended to provide a single carriageway road approximately 7 km (4.3 miles) long between the Ridgeway and the existing Manor Roundabout, providing a bypass for through traffic to Redlands, Broadwey and Upwey. Skanska Civil Engineering, who undertook construction of the road on behalf of Dorset County Council,

commissioned Oxford Archaeology (OA) to undertake a programme of archaeological works to mitigate the impact of the scheme.

From October 2008 to January 2009 OA carried out full excavation of an area measuring 5.1 ha. (12.6 acres) at Ridgeway Hill as part of the scheme. Features recorded included a prehistoric enclosure on the top of the ridge, Neolithic pits with both feasting waste and burials and Bronze Age burials including crouched inhumations, three 'beaker' burials and a number of limestone cists, as well as a round barrow with a central cremation buried with a Wessex-style dagger. A number of Roman inhumations, including three inserted into the round barrow, were also excavated. Five very large quarry pits and a number of linear features dated to the Roman period were also investigated. Intriguingly, a row of twenty apparently empty and undated graves were located a few hundred metres from the pit discussed in this chapter; whether these were originally intended for the victims who ended up in a mass burial in the pit is a matter that can only be speculated on, though it should be noted that one would expect ordinary judicial victims to be buried in individual graves.²

The location of the mass burial was not originally intended for excavation as part of the initial 'site strip', which stopped just short of the location of the mass burial pit due to health and safety considerations relating to the existing road. As a result, the hedge line removal at the edge of the

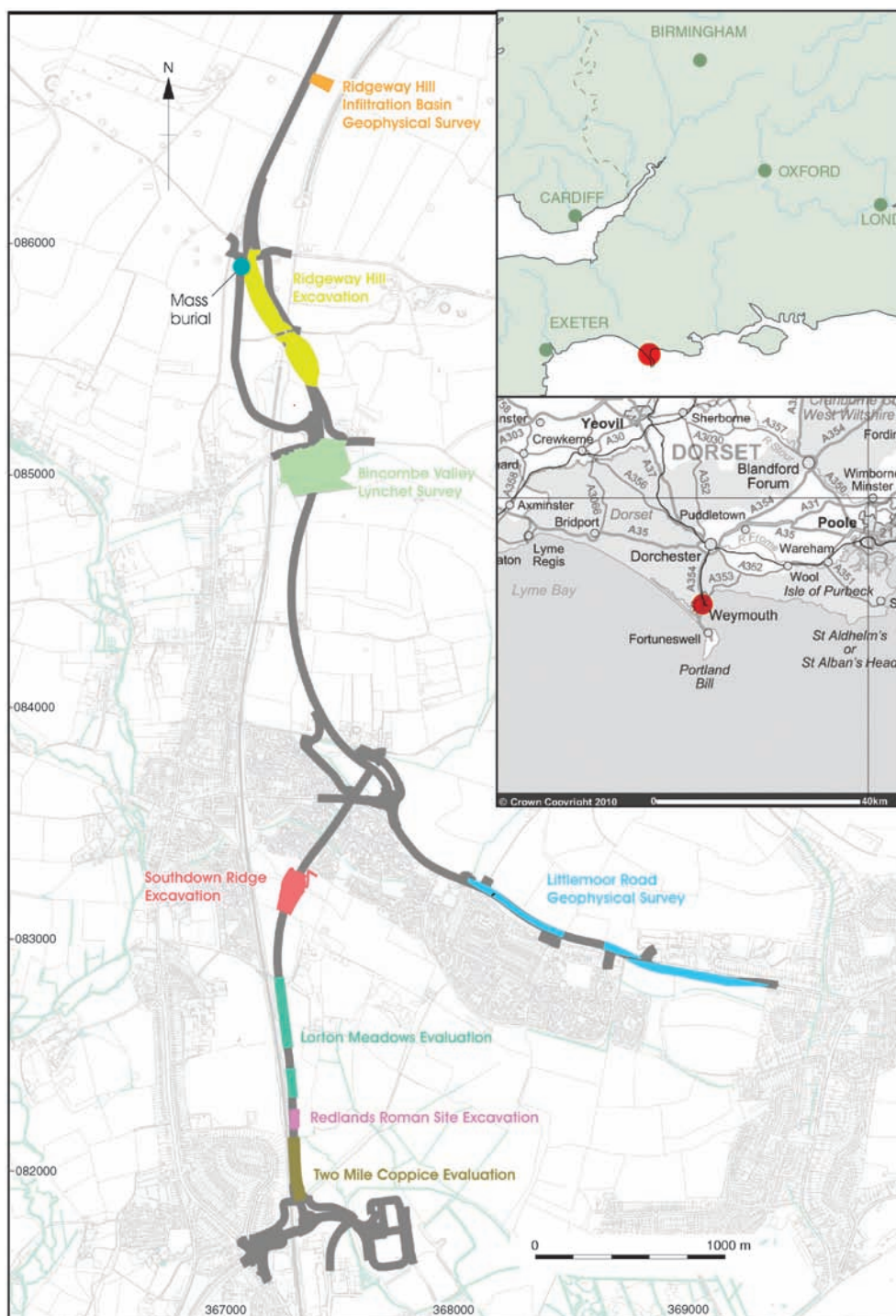


Figure 7.1. Location of the Ridgeway Hill site. (Image courtesy of Oxford Archaeology)

site was examined as part of an archaeological watching brief once protective measures were in place for traffic during the main construction phase of the road. Machining was stopped as soon as the existence of the feature was spotted. It soon became apparent that this was not an individual burial but a mass burial, and therefore of some archaeological significance.

Location and topography

The burial pit was located on the crest of Ridgeway Hill in Dorset.³ The Roman road that is partly fossilised in the line of the modern A354 passes very close to the site, which is located in the Domesday hundred of Cullifordtree. The site is bounded by the A354 immediately to the west, the road to Broadmayne to the north, the unclassified road to Bincombe to the south, and the existing fields of Down Farm to the east.

The geology of Ridgeway Hill consists of Cretaceous period Upper Chalk. Overlying the solid chalk was a 0.3 m-thick layer of ploughsoil with a diffuse boundary between the two due to ploughing activity. Topographically, the site straddles the summit of the Ridgeway at approximately 140 m above sea level. The burial pit was located under the line of a boundary hedge marking the western extent of arable fields. Immediately to the west the ground dropped sharply into the cutting for the existing A354.

Excavation methodology

Once machining was halted, the area was cleaned by hand in order to define the extent of the feature. Both skulls and partial skeletons were visible in the upper fill. As cleaning progressed it quickly became apparent that multiple 'burials' or parts thereof were present. In order to fully understand the nature of the deposit a decision was taken, in spite of the many logistical challenges it entailed, to attempt to reveal all the skulls and skeletons before lifting any of them. Due to the contorted nature of the individual skeletons, this was the only way to apply a stratigraphic approach. It was also the

most efficient way of ensuring that skeletons were identified and lifted individually.⁴

Apart from the skulls and skeletons, the only finds were a few fragments of Iron Age and early Roman pottery, as well as a few worked flints and metalwork. The Iron Age is characterised by a range of distinctive burial practices, many of which have a focus on dismemberment and decapitation so such a deposit, although extremely unusual, would not be entirely out of place in an Iron Age context.⁵ This fact, combined with the proximity of notable monuments of this date such as Maiden Castle and settlement sites from the Dorchester area, in particular from Poundbury, led to the initial suggestion that the mass burial might be Iron Age.⁶ To resolve the question of date a single sample of bone was submitted for radiocarbon dating at this stage. A right tibia from a partial skeleton of a young adult, estimated to have been between eighteen and twenty years old at the time of death, produced a date of AD 890–1030.⁷

After removal of all the human remains, the partially silted pit was half sectioned and sampled. The pit is similar in form to five large pits discovered as part of the main excavation at Ridgeway Hill, which seem likely to have been extraction pits for small-scale quarrying of the chalk bedrock. Dating material recovered from the fills of all the features demonstrates a Roman date of infilling. The pit used for the mass burial was almost certainly dug in the late Iron Age or Roman period and allowed to silt up naturally. It was partially filled when the human remains were deposited.

All spoil was meticulously sifted by hand to achieve maximum retrieval of human remains. A total of 1,199 fragments of human bone were recovered from the disturbed spoil deposit created by machining when the feature was initially discovered.⁸ A further 440 fragments were disturbed but not removed by machine, and were recovered during the initial hand-cleaning of the feature.⁹ A small quantity of human bone which could not be definitively assigned to individual



Figure 7.2. The full extent of the skeletal deposit within the pit. (Image courtesy of Oxford Archaeology)

skeletons during the detailed excavation was three-dimensionally recorded.¹⁰

The deposit

The pit and burials

The pit in which the mass burial was found (Recorded as Pit 3690) was an irregular ovoid measuring more than 7 m from north to south, 6.8 m from west-east, and 1.66 m in depth. The base of the pit was concave and irregular, as were the sides, due in part to the irregular nature of the natural chalk. The partially silted pit had been re-used for the burial of at least fifty-one male individuals of tenth- to eleventh-century date. All the men had been decapitated: skulls and mandibles were deposited in a pile located at the southern edge of the pit while the skeletons had apparently been

thrown in with little care throughout the feature, one on top of another (Figure 7.2).

The skull deposit comprised fifty-one tightly-packed skulls located at the southern edge of the pit. Orientations varied, as did the position of the head (on the left side, on the right side, face down, resting on the occipital bone, or resting on the base of the skull). All the skulls are those of adult males, many of whom appear to have been young, with some older males. All skulls and mandibles were associated with at least one and as many as six cervical vertebrae, which exhibited a variety of cut marks relating to decapitation. In addition many mandibles showed evidence of multiple sharp-force trauma which took place at or near the time of death (*i.e.* peri-mortem).

Skeletons had been distributed in a variety of positions and orientations, one on top of another,

many with splayed limbs suggesting a distinct lack of care.¹¹ As with the skulls, almost all of the skeletons are those of adult males, many of whom were young adults. Limited evidence of sharp force trauma was also seen on the skeletons and included cuts to the pelvis of one, one cut clavicle, possible blunt force trauma to the vertebrae of three, the sternum of one and a further two with characteristic defensive wounds to the hands. The skeletons also exhibited evidence of two femoral fractures, a healed rib fracture, at least three examples of osteomyelitis, osteophytosis, Schmorl's nodes, osteochondritis dissecans and cribra orbitalia. Dental pathology included crown and root fractures, weapon-induced cuts, chips to enamel, deliberate modification of teeth (discussed in more detail below), unusual wear patterns indicating possible occupational use of teeth, calculus, abscesses and ante-mortem tooth loss.

The stratigraphy of the pit is well understood. There were a total of 128 contexts, the majority of which comprised human remains.¹² The sequence of activity can be defined as follows: the pit was dug, presumably as a quarry for chalk at some point in the late Iron Age or Roman period; the pit was abandoned and left, silting up naturally; some centuries later, when partially silted, the pit was used for the deposition of the men in a single event; the pit was backfilled immediately after their deposition. Evidence for the latter is suggested by the absence of any evidence for animal activity in the form of burrowing, and gnawing. Furthermore, the small bones of the hands and feet were generally present in their original positions except where disturbed by machine.

A total of forty-one pottery sherds weighing a total of 209 g were recovered from the fills of the pit.¹³ The assemblage is mixed and ranges in date from the later Iron Age to the third or fourth centuries AD.¹⁴ A total of 111 worked flints were recovered. Given the context of discovery, the flint is clearly residual. Two small limestone balls measuring 21 mm and 23 mm in diameter were recovered from the main backfill of the pit.¹⁵ These

weigh too little to have had a function as slingshots and although natural in origin might have been retained as personal possessions and possibly used as marbles. In common with the Iron Age and Roman pottery, both items may have been residual. Five pieces of iron were recovered from the fill of the pit. These comprise two small unidentified fragments which are little more than crumbs, two nail stem fragments and a socket which may derive from a small spearhead.¹⁶ The socket is small, measuring 53 mm in length and, though encrusted with corrosion products, appears to be a split socket. A total of fifty-seven fragments of animal bone were recovered from the burial infill of the pit and from the machine disturbance, mostly in good condition.

Radiocarbon dating

In addition to the tibia sample discussed above, two further samples were submitted after the completion of the excavation. One skeleton produced a date range, once calibrated, of AD 890–1020¹⁷ and a second skeleton dated to AD 970–1050.¹⁸ The three radiocarbon measurements are statistically consistent. As it is certain that all three individuals were buried as a single event it can be concluded that the three individuals sampled were likely (with 93 per cent confidence) to have been buried in the period cal. AD 970–1025 and within this range most probably (with 68 per cent confidence) in the period cal. AD 985–1020.¹⁹

Isotope analysis

Samples of enamel and dentine from the teeth of ten individuals were selected for assessment of potential for isotope analysis in order to identify the likely region of origin of the executed men. The oxygen isotope composition is consistent with an origin in the Scandinavian countries, and one individual is only compatible with an origin north of the Arctic Circle in the most northerly areas of Scandinavia. The range of both strontium and oxygen isotope values shows that this is a group of people that did not have a common geographic

origin. The carbon and nitrogen isotope data most closely matches populations from the Iron Age and Viking periods in Scandinavia, which are typified by a high protein-based diet.²⁰ The data are consistent with this being a group of men who originated from a variety of places within the Scandinavian countries.

Analysis of tooth enamel samples from the remaining skulls is, at the time of writing, being carried out as part of the detailed post-excavation analysis, and will provide additional data on the origin of these people; although the ten analysed so far appear to be Scandinavian in origin, the historical evidence (discussed below) suggests that this cannot therefore be assumed to be the case for the whole group. Additional analysis of isotopes from bones such as ribs and femurs would provide complementary information about where these people lived during their later lives, since unlike the composition of tooth enamel, which is fixed at the time the teeth form, the composition of bone collagen turns over at varying rates and can be expected to reflect change in place of residence during childhood and later life. This would help us to identify whether the executed individuals had come directly from Scandinavia, or whether some or all of them had been living in England prior to the events which led to their deaths. However, it is unlikely that it will be possible to associate skulls with skeletons in most cases.

Documentary research²¹

The radiocarbon results (AD 970–1025) suggest that the mass burial is most likely to date from the reign of Æthelred ‘the Unready’ (978–1016). However, the date range also spans the reigns of Edgar (959–75), Edward (975–78), Swein (during Æthelred’s exile in 1013–14), Edmund (1016) and Cnut the Great (1016–35). After fifty years of peace, Viking attacks began again in southern England in the 980s and continued until the final conquest of the kingdom by the Danish king Cnut in 1016. Events recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon*

Chronicle include the ravaging of Portland in 982, attacks across the county in 998, the ravaging of the county by Viking forces in 1015, and a battle in the north of Dorset, near Gillingham, in 1016.²² The isotope analysis suggests a range of geographical origins for at least ten of the individuals in the mass grave that suits what little we know about Viking armies, and the number of bodies could suggest that we are dealing with a ship’s crew.²³ Alternatively, it is known that during the reign of Æthelred both English and Vikings operated as mercenaries and could be found fighting on either side. Without further isotope analysis it cannot be assumed that all the dead were Vikings. It is reasonable to suggest that warfare would be the most common scenario in which such a mass killing would occur. Osteological evidence, however, seems to suggest mass execution. The lack of ante-mortem injuries among the men may suggest that they were not warriors. The men could have been prisoners of war executed by their enemies or hostages who were executed by their captors. Although it seems likely that these were Vikings executed by the English, it is also possible that a group of Viking mercenaries fighting for the English could have been executed by Vikings. This latter suggestion is arguably less likely, as the location of the pit has all the markers of a Anglo-Saxon execution site. The judicial execution by the English authorities of individuals perceived as traitors, be they English or settled Vikings, is also a possibility.

Post-Excavation: Research potential of the mass burial

At the time of writing, detailed osteological analysis is virtually complete and report writing is underway. Preliminary assessment during fieldwork suggested that the bulk of the assemblage was male. However, small quantities of bone from the disturbed remains were very tentatively identified as female. It will be important to determine whether this is really the case. If females are present what does this tell us about the group? Are they Anglo-Saxon or Viking?

Assessment data indicates that most of the group are adolescents and young adults with a smaller number who appear older. If teenagers and older adults are present it will be necessary to consider the reasons why this is so. Did warrior bands include a proportion of younger individuals? If so, what was their status within the group? There is also evidence to suggest the presence of a small number of older adults. Were they the more senior members of the group?

The vast majority of the peri-mortem trauma seen on the remains relates to the removal of the head. There is very clear evidence of cut marks to the bones of the upper spine in the vicinity of the neck (cervical vertebrae) for most of the individuals. All appear to have been made with a sharp bladed weapon, probably a sword. It is hoped that microscopic analysis will help to identify the types of weapons used as well as directionality, nature, tool morphology and the like. A number of individuals have multiple cut-marks on the skull (cranium), mandible, and vertebrae. Does this indicate that in some cases it took several blows to remove the head? Did the blows come from the front, the sides or the back? Decapitations with multiple or excessively violent blows to the neck indicate that an individual has been forcibly killed in a formalised manner. There is no doubt that some of the blows would have been inflicted with massive force, particularly those which slice through the mastoid process, possibly the thickest element of the skull. There is very little evidence of trauma that is unrelated to removal of the head. Does this indicate that the group were not captured in a skirmish or battle? Evidence of healed trauma is almost entirely absent. Is this a reflection of the young age of much of the group or an indication that they were not a warrior band?

Two healed fractures to the thigh bone (femur) were identified in assessment. These fractures had healed after a fashion but are unlikely to have been medically treated (splinted) in any way and in one case this may have led to a marked shortening of the right limb.²⁴ Both of these individuals may have

had pronounced limps. Again this is significant and suggests that the needs of individuals who would have been disabled were accommodated in some way.

At least three and possibly four long bones showed evidence of osteomyelitis, which provides evidence of serious and long-standing infection. This condition may result from the direct injection of bacteria from the skin surface during a penetrating bone injury. The appearance of these bones indicates that these individuals had lived with the infection for some considerable time although they would have been in pain and mobility would have been affected. This is surely significant if the group were Viking warriors.

An interesting example of dental modification came to light during assessment on the upper left and right first incisors of one particular adult male.²⁵ The modification takes the form of filed grooves on the anterior surface of both teeth. At least four grooves are visible. A paper from 2005 originally identified twenty-four examples in Viking assemblages, most of whom were young men.²⁶ The author of that paper notes that more than more than one hundred cases have now been identified from different parts of Sweden and Denmark, the majority from the island of Gotland. Strontium analysis has indicated that some of these men derive from the east, possibly as far as Russia.²⁷ The marks are so well made that it is most likely they were filed by a person of great skill. The reason for, and importance of, the furrows are obscure. Individuals would have to smile or grimace quite broadly to show filed furrows. Did the Weymouth man have Scandinavian origins or was he an Anglo-Saxon mercenary who had adopted some Viking practices? A number of individuals from the mass burial also exhibit unusual dental wear patterns. It is likely that these are related to the use of teeth as tools. With further research, it may be possible to suggest what types of activities were being undertaken.

The osteological and isotope analysis will provide invaluable data for comparison with assemblages in

the UK and abroad. This is a group of individuals who were certainly executed and buried in a single event. There are few comparable osteological groups in the UK. A significant assemblage was excavated at St John's College, Oxford, by Thames Valley Archaeological Services in 2009. The skeletons had been placed in a disorganised manner in a variety of positions and orientations with legs and arms splayed within the ditch of a partially-infilled Neolithic henge.²⁸ It is likely that they were naked when buried, given the absence of all but a single belt buckle. The assemblage at St John's comprised a minimum of thirty-three men and one adolescent with considerable evidence of peri-mortem trauma. The deposit at St John's College has much in common with the Ridgeway Hill burial pit and both contrast with the much more organised mass burial at the fifteenth-century battlefield of Towton (Yorks.).²⁹ Similarly, in the Ridgeway burial pit it seems that the headless bodies were thrown haphazardly into the pit, with the minimum of care. Some were laid on their backs, some on their fronts, and some on their sides, with a range of orientations. The position of the arms and legs was extremely irregular and there was no evidence that the hands or feet had been bound. The absence of any finds such as those associated with clothing indicates that they may have been naked when thrown into the pit. Whether or not this is evidence of lack of respect for the dead or merely practical in reducing the labour involved by making best use of the available space is difficult to say.

The use of the pit for the burial of these individuals is of undoubted significance even though it was probably dug in the late Iron Age/Roman period for chalk and had partially silted by the tenth century. Much recent work has identified favoured locations for Anglo-Saxon execution sites: important factors are elevation, proximity to earlier (usually prehistoric) monuments, and proximity to major boundaries and roads,³⁰ all of which characterise the location of the mass burial. It is quite conceivable that formal execution took

place in front of a large crowd of spectators who understood the meaning of exclusion. Pagans and those convicted of certain crimes were denied burial in consecrated ground. The mass burial clearly falls into the category of burial in the archaeological record described as deviant. Factors that might account for such a burial are battle, execution, massacre, murder, plague, sacrifice, suicide, and superstition.³¹ Is this an example of a warband throwing bodies into a pit, or a more formal judicial execution? Battle victims can be divided into two types: victims respectfully buried in normal community cemeteries (*i.e.* buried by their own side); and those buried in mass graves as a necessity to clear the scene of violence quickly, either by their compatriots or, more likely, by their opponents.

It will be important to consider comparisons with Anglo-Saxon execution cemeteries. Their characteristics are variously prone burials, multiple interments, decapitation, evidence of restraint, shallow and cramped burial and mutilation.³² Current evidence suggests that this group were formally executed, most probably by Anglo-Saxons in a location which would have had great significance as one where justice was dispensed. It seems likely that some skulls are missing from the mass burial; in other words, there are more bodies than heads. Does this suggest that heads were taken/displayed as trophies? In his analysis of decapitations within Anglo-Saxon execution cemeteries Andrew Reynolds highlights instances of missing skulls, skulls buried later than their associated corpses and skulls with indications of weathering or damage.³³ He argued that such evidence constitutes the archaeology of the OE *heafod stoccan* (head stakes) recorded in certain charter bounds. References to *heafod stoccan* have been interpreted in a variety of ways including 'stakes set up to mark the bounds of a ploughland' or as 'a stock post on which the head of a criminal was fixed after beheading'.³⁴ The excavated execution burials at Old Dairy Cottage, near Winchester, were shown to be coincident with the

heafod stoccan mentioned in three independent sets of charter bounds, while at Bran Ditch (Cams.) and Roche Court Down (Wilts.), heads were buried without mandibles, indicating long-term display. At Wor Barrow (Dors.), eight out of seventeen bodies were buried without their heads. It appears in all cases as though the sword was the favoured instrument of decapitation. A detail in an eleventh-century manuscript, Cotton Claudius B.IV, depicting Abraham's sacrifice of his son, Isaac (which, notably, took place at height: Figure 7.3), shows Isaac about to be decapitated with a sword.³⁵ Another illustration from another contemporary manuscript, the Harley Psalter, shows decapitated bodies apparently buried inside a mound (Figure 7.4).³⁶

There are clear differences between known Anglo-Saxon execution cemeteries and the Ridgeway mass burial, yet there are clear similarities in the choice of location. There is no evidence that the individuals were bound, so how/why did they submit? Were they bound, then unbound after execution? It is likely that the executions took place in the vicinity of the pit. It would not make sense to execute the men elsewhere then transport them up the hill. The absence of any artefacts relating to clothing suggests that the men were stripped prior to execution/burial in the pit. How were more than fifty men subdued, presumably forced to walk up to the Ridgeway and submit, one by one, to execution? It is possible that they were executed in front of a large crowd of spectators and that there were multiple executioners. Even if one allows for the presence of multiple executioners, most of the men would have watched as a number of their comrades were violently executed. Skeleton 3806, which appears to have been that of one of the first individuals to be executed and deposited in the pit, provides some evidence of this (Figure 7.5).

The following extract from the Icelandic *Jómsvíkinga saga*, who were reputedly fearless warriors from the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, recounts a mass execution in which the victims bravely faced death:³⁷

...the Jomsvikings put up no resistance. The seventy of them were taken ashore and the earl had them all tied to one rope... Three gravely wounded men were freed from the rope and thralls were appointed to guard them and twist sticks in their hair. Porkell leira now proceeded to cut off their heads... Then the ninth man was released and Porkell asked him as usual [what he thought about dying]. He said: 'I am well content to die as are all our comrades. But I will not let myself be slaughtered like a sheep: I would rather face the blow. Strike straight at my face and watch carefully if I pale at all...'

The isotope analysis carried out on samples from ten skulls has indicated a wide range of Scandinavian origins. There is some historical evidence which suggests that Viking armies included men from a very wide geographical area. Further isotope analysis will determine if this is the case for the group as a whole. The proposed isotope analysis is essential to determine whether or not the assemblage is exclusively Viking or a combination of Vikings and Anglo-Saxons, as documentary evidence tells us that alliances were very fluid, with Vikings and Anglo-Saxons fighting on both sides as mercenaries. As well as contributing information about childhood origins, isotope analysis can also provide information on where an individual spent the last two or so years of his life. Were these men settlers or, literally, just off the boat?

The radiocarbon dates have been refined to give a date range of AD 970–1025 which places the mass burial broadly in the reign of Æthelred the Unready (978–1016). As has been noted, a number of entries in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* relate to Dorset during this period.³⁸ An alternative context for the mass burial is the St Brice's Day massacre, which took place on 13th November 1002. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for the year 1002 says that the king, hearing of a plot to kill him and seize power, ordered 'all the Danish men who were in England' to be killed ('Danish' being the then current word for what we would now call Scandinavians).³⁹ A charter for St Frideswide's in Oxford, issued two years later, refers to Æthelred's



Figure 7.3. An eleventh-century depiction of Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son, Isaac (BL MS Cotton Claudius B.IV, fol. 38r.). (© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved)

orders that 'all the Danes who had sprung up in this island, sprouting like cockles amongst the wheat, were to be destroyed by a most just extermination'.⁴⁰ The type of massacre recorded has been described as more of a lynching than an orderly execution,⁴¹ and one might expect multiple injuries from a variety of angles, inflicted by different weapons and affecting multiple parts of the skeleton.

Conclusion

The date of the pit, combined with its location and the fact that all the men appear to have been executed, is very significant. Favoured locations for Anglo-Saxon execution cemeteries were elevated, close to parish boundaries and, often, to prehistoric monuments. The site at Ridgeway Hill conforms to this pattern, with one obvious difference: the



Figure 7.4. The Harley Psalter's depiction of torture and a mound apparently containing decapitated corpses (BL MS Harley 603, fol. 67r.). (© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved)



Figure 7.5. Skeleton 3806: the decapitated skeleton of the individual who was probably the first to be executed and deposited in the pit. (Image courtesy of Oxford Archaeology)

mass burial is a single event and not a cemetery containing a number of men and women executed and buried over a period of years. Furthermore, the pit was re-used and not deliberately dug for deposition of the men. The large number of individuals involved and the manner of deposition make it unlikely that normal criminal justice was being practised.

To date, the evidence strongly suggests that the mass burial is a unique discovery in medieval Britain, and possibly Europe. The osteological analysis can be seen as the basic building block of the project, and this is complemented by further isotope analysis and documentary research. The greater the level of data that we can acquire on the individuals, the more clearly we will be able to understand their local and historical context, and the greater their value for further research.

Notes

1. L. Loe, A. Boyle, H. Webb and D. Score, *'Given to the Ground': A Viking Age Mass Grave on Ridgeway Hill, Weymouth* (Dorchester, 2014). The current paper was submitted for publication in summer 2013. A version of this paper was first published in *Haskins Society Journal* 25 and it appears here with the permission of Boydell & Brewer.
2. A. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs* (Oxford, 2009).
3. O.S. SY 672859.
4. A detailed discussion of the excavation methodology is presented in Loe *et al.*, *'Given to the Ground'*.
5. E.g. B. W. Cunliffe and C. Poole, *Danebury. An Iron Age Hillfort in Hampshire*, Council for British Archaeology (York, 1991).
6. R. E. M. Wheeler, *Maiden Castle, Dorset*, Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London 12 (London, 1943); C. J. S. Green, *Excavations at Poundbury, Dorchester, Dorset, 1966–1982, Vol. 1: the Settlements*, Dorset Natural History and Archaeology Society Monograph 7 (Dorchester, 1987); Wessex Archaeology, 'Land North of Poundbury Farm, Poundbury, Dorchester, Dorset', unpublished client report (2007), Ref. 60021.02.
7. Date recorded as 1055±40 years Before Present (BP) at a 95.4 per cent probability; GU-19115 (Laboratory number assigned by Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre).
8. OA context no. 3681.
9. OA context no. 3685.
10. This consisted of sixty-seven small finds; OA context no. 3685.
11. The deposit was allocated sixty-five separate contexts within pit fill 3685.
12. N.B. machine disturbance affected skeletons in the north-western and north-eastern parts of the pit. The variation in number of skulls versus the number of contexts allocated to skeletons can be explained in part by this in that some limbs were disassociated from their skeletons. At the time of writing, it is hoped that some of these will be associated during post-excavation analysis.
13. These were in fills 3681, 3683, 3685, and 3689.
14. It is notable that early medieval pottery was absent. This may suggest the mass inhumation was a relatively incidental episode and represented the only significant activity connected with this feature since the late Roman period.
15. OA context no. 3685. No small find numbers.
16. These are catalogued as small find no. 10409 (unidentified fragments), find nos 10402 and 10429 (nail stem fragments), and no. 10328 (socket).
17. Skeleton 3763: 1090±30 BP; GU-20633.
18. Skeleton 3804: 1055±30 BP; GU-20632. Advice on the dates was supplied by Alex Bayliss of English Heritage.
19. The weighted mean of the three measurements was calibrated using IntCal 09. The weighted mean is 1049±19 BP, which calibrates to 900–915 cal AD (2 per cent probability) or 970–1025 cal AD (93 per cent probability), or 985–1020 cal AD (68 per cent probability). It is highly unlikely that further radiocarbon determinations will provide more precise dating. Further samples could (theoretically) reduce the error on the weighted mean, but it is probably as low as it is scientifically valid to go already (there is a point where you meet irreducible error).
20. See, e.g., L. Bender Jørgensen, 'Rural Economy: Ecology, Hunting, Pastoralism, Agricultural and Nutritional Aspects', in *The Scandinavians from the Vendel Period to the Tenth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. J. Jesch (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 129–52.
21. This section is based directly on the work of L. Abrams, in L. Loe *et al.*, *'Given to the Ground'*, pp. 10–15.

22. ASC C 982, CDE 998, 1015, 1016.
23. For some speculation on the implications of this, see R. Lavelle, 'Law, Death and Peacemaking in the "Second Viking Age": an Ealdorman, his King, and Some "Danes" in Wessex', below, pp. 131–34.
24. However, it should also be noted that shortening of the limb following femoral fracture does not necessarily imply an absence of medical care. It was known that shock and blood loss resultant to any attempt to reduce the fracture would often lead to death, so the fractures were deliberately left alone.
25. Recorded as Skull 3736
26. C. Arcini, 'The Vikings Bare their Filed Teeth', *American Journal of Anthropology* 128 (2005), pp. 727–33.
27. C. Arcini, pers. comm.
28. C. Falys, 'The Human Bone', in *Former Queen Elizabeth House (Kendrew Quadrangle), St John's College, Blackhall Road, Oxford, A Post-excavation Assessment for St John's College, Oxford*, ed. S. Wallis, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, unpublished client report, 2010, pp. 34–66, at p. 34. See also A. M. Pollard, P. Ditchfield, E. Piva, S. Wallis, C. Falys and S. Ford, "'Sprouting Like Cockle Amongst the Wheat": the St. Brice's Day Massacre and the Isotopic Analysis of Human Bones from St. John's College, Oxford', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 31 (2012), pp. 83–102.
29. V. Fiorato, A. Boylston and C. Knüsel (eds), *Blood Red Roses: the Archaeology of a Mass Grave from the Battle of Towton AD 1461* (Oxford, 2000).
30. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*.
31. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, p. 38.
32. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, p. 44. Earlier identification of execution sites is in T. Dickinson, *Cuddesdon and Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire: Two Early Saxon 'Princely' Sites in Wessex*, BAR British Ser. 1 (Oxford, 1974), p. 56.
33. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, p. 44.
34. G. B. Grundy 'The Saxon Land Charters of Wiltshire', *Archaeological Journal* 1st Ser. 76 (1919), pp. 143–301, at p. 178; P. H. Reaney, *The Origins of English Place-Names* (London, 1960), p. 158; Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, p. 31.
35. British Library MS Cotton Claudius B.IV fol. 38r., discussed in Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, pp. 27–8.
36. British Library MS Harley 603 fol. 67r., discussed in Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, pp. 28–9.
37. *The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. N. F. Blake (London, 1962), pp. 40–1.
38. See above, p. 114.
39. ASC CDE 1002.
40. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 909.
41. S. Preston, 'Anglo-Saxon Weapons', in *Former Queen Elizabeth House (Kendrew Quadrangle), St John's College*, ed. Wallis, pp. 66–75, at p. 73, n. 14.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Law, Death and Peacemaking in the ‘Second Viking Age’: An Ealdorman, his King, and some ‘Danes’ in Wessex¹

Ryan Lavelle

One of the themes emerging thus far from the essays in this volume is that a focus on specific individuals – whether named or, more frequently, remaining stubbornly anonymous in our sources – can help us to get closer to those interactions between ‘West Saxons’ and ‘Danes’ in the early middle ages which played a key role in the formation of the history of the region and the Danes’ place within it. This chapter is an attempt to address the personal and interpersonal aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian relations in Wessex through considering peacemaking and legal execution in their geographical context, and the circumstances of specific events which took place or are likely to have taken place in the so-called ‘Second Viking Age’.² As has been noted, many of the political interests during this period were royally directed but this chapter focuses on the manner in which ealdormanric interests played a role in their implementation.

The examination, which develops and supplements discussions on the perception of warfare by the late tenth-century ealdorman of Western Wessex, Æthelweard, in my earlier work, *Alfred’s Wars*,³ is framed by consideration of the positions of ealdormen. These were gubernatorial figures, often part of the extended royal kindred, who held office for specific areas in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and who, by the tenth century, had begun to have responsibilities for large regions. Though hardly a novel approach for the study of

later Anglo-Saxon politics,⁴ consideration of such a figure as Æthelweard illuminates the personal and familial nature of the links that allowed Anglo-Scandinavian relations to function in tenth- and eleventh-century Wessex. In addressing these issues, this chapter first considers Ealdorman Æthelweard himself; following this, his place in the making of peace with a group of ‘Danes’ (likely to have been predominantly Norwegian Vikings) in 993/94 and the possible consequences of that peacemaking will be addressed. The sense of identity and the connections of the ealdorman, as expressed in Æthelweard’s own Latin *Chronicon*, may have had implications for his position in the making of peace and, in turn, the making of that peace seems to have related directly to the execution of a group of individuals from a range of Scandinavian locations on the Dorset Ridgeway. Although Æthelweard may have played no part in that latter event – and indeed played only a supporting role in the events of 993/94 – the local and regional contexts of both the peacemaking and the executions are nonetheless relevant for consideration here.

Ealdorman Æthelweard: his work and connections

Æthelweard’s region of responsibility was that ‘of the western provinces’ (*occidentalium prouinciarum*),⁵ formed of, principally, the shires of Dorset, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. As the author

of a Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, written to communicate with his cousin Matilda, abbess of the German nunnery of Essen (North Rhine-Westphalia), and as patron of one of the most significant writers known from Anglo-Saxon England, Ælfric, abbot of Cerne Abbas, Dorset (later abbot of Eynsham, Oxon.), as well as a member of a branch of the royal kindred, Æthelweard stands astride the great cultural and intellectual movements of his age.⁶

Æthelweard probably wrote his *Chronicon*, or at least the version which survives, during the reign of Æthelred II (978–1016), as his intention to write a section of the *Chronicon* on the 'deeds' of that king is apparent from its list of contents. There is relative consensus on a date of the *Chronicon* as the early years of that reign, 978×88, with a likelihood of the later years in that range.⁷ Mechtild Gretsch commented that such a date meant that he wrote before any of Ælfric's known works were written but it is also significant that this date places the writing of the *Chronicon* squarely between the earliest Viking attacks of the 'Second Viking Age', which hit southern and south-western England in particular, and the making of peace in the 990s.

Although Æthelweard's attempts at writing his *Chronicon* in a rather high-flown style of Latin have been the subject of some critical consideration since as early as the twelfth century, when William of Malmesbury famously expressed disdain for its quality, Æthelweard's choices of terminology are significant enough to suggest that they were conscious and meaningful.⁸ For example, his use of the term 'West Angles' to refer to his own group, the West Saxons, may reflect the manner in which Æthelweard thought of the place of Wessex within a larger national narrative of an *Angelcynn*.⁹ Furthermore, Matthew Townend has noted Æthelweard's sensitivity to the Norse language, suggesting that 'his desire (and ability) to reproduce Norse forms as accurately as possible, rather than employing Anglicised forms' was a manifestation of his interest in Anglo-Scandinavian relations.¹⁰

Æthelweard's historical outlook seems to have been predicated upon the significance of the role of an ealdorman, as well as upon the identities of West Saxons and Danes in the early middle ages. Wessex is frequently used as a geographical frame of reference at points which do not reflect usage in the 'main' *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*,¹¹ and it is a plausible likelihood that his narrative for the period from the ninth century and beyond was constructed to reflect the achievements and tasks of ealdormen.¹² Such purposes were additional to the cultivation of family links between himself and his Continental cousin, though, given that the German branches of Matilda's family could be recorded as *duces*,¹³ using the word which Æthelweard frequently used to describe ealdormen, the emphasis on ealdormen and family links were probably not unrelated. Although some information on events prior to 892 is common to both the *Chronicon* and 'main' *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and there are clear discrepancies thereafter, leading to debate regarding the state of a vernacular chronicle used by Æthelweard as his source for events before and after 892,¹⁴ one may wonder whether details which did not suit a favourable familial or ealdormanric consciousness had been whitewashed or discarded.¹⁵ Nonetheless, that left plenty that could be included in reference to Danes in Wessex.

Æthelweard's reference to the earliest arrival of 'Danes' (*Dani*, not 'Northmen'), in Portland, Dorset, linked to the year of 787, to which he referred being 'more than 334' (*trecentesimus et supra trigesimus quartus*) years since the arrival of the legendary figures Hengest and Horsa in Britain, draws a conscious parallel between one migration story and another in a manner which may presage Henry of Huntingdon's more famous inclusion of Danes in narratives of *successive* migrations to Britain, expressed in the twelfth century.¹⁶ As Derek Gore's contribution to this volume reminds us, Æthelweard names the late eighth-century official, a certain Beaduheard, who had to face those first Danes in Wessex.¹⁷ Although Beaduheard was a king's reeve (*exactor regis*) rather than ealdorman,

the local responsibility of the unfortunate official is apparent in Æthelweard's account, and Beaduheard is one of a number of West Saxon officials named by Æthelweard, otherwise mostly ealdormen.¹⁸ It seems likely that Beaduheard's appearance in the *Chronicon* stemmed from Æthelweard's notion of the responsibilities of his own office, and it is perhaps notable that none of Æthelweard's recorded ealdormen seems to have let down the coastal defences as badly as the reeve, Beaduheard – a manifestation of Æthelweard's sense of the importance of ealdormen over reeves?¹⁹ Given that a Latin version of Æthelweard's title is repeated on a number of occasions, with variations, in reference to himself throughout his *Chronicon*, he took his responsibilities seriously. One of his responsibilities probably included maintaining the memory of certain of his predecessors, many of whom seem to have been related to him (and thus would have been important to Matilda), and many of whose careers seem to have been shaped through interactions with Danes in the ninth or tenth centuries.

As I have noted elsewhere, it seems likely that, when writing about the appearance of Vikings in Wessex, Æthelweard may have also drawn upon his own experiences and expectations as an ealdorman. The appearance of a duty for coastal watch on a Cornish charter pertaining to Ealdorman Æthelweard, dating from the reign of Edward the Martyr (975–8), recorded at a point in the charter where it might more normally record the duty to build fortifications, may suggest a resurgence of Viking activity at this western part of the realm.²⁰ In common with tenth-century practice, the charter includes the boundaries of the land to which the charter referred, and the fact that it relates to a place later known for its 'beacon' function, St Keverne Beacon, can hardly be incidental to such duties of coastal defence.²¹ To this end, it is worth adding that Æthelweard makes reference to the 'cliff known as Swanage' (*rupem quæ Suuanauuic nuncupatur*) as the landward location where a large number of Viking ships were lost at sea in 877, an incidental geographical detail not in the *Anglo-*

Saxon Chronicle which may reveal something of the ealdorman's south-western knowledge.²²

A second ealdorman, linked in narrative history to Æthelweard, is a certain Odda (or Oda), ealdorman of Devon, a holder of Æthelweard's office in the late ninth century. Æthelweard's reading of the events of the attack on 'a certain fortress' (*quodam castro*), recorded elsewhere by Asser as *Arx Cynuit*, shows the recognition of the active role of an ealdorman in the history of West Saxon-Danish relations.²³ In contrast to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Asser's *Vita Alfredi*, which cast the events in the light of a royal narrative and emphasised the king's march to battle at *Eðandun* (probably Edington, Wilts.), Æthelweard seems to have edited out much of this narrative, cutting directly from events at the fortress to a *shorter* account of the battle 'in loco Ethandune'. Æthelweard explicitly linked the events at the fortress and the battle of Edington, emphasising the ealdorman's role in the eventual victory over the Danes.

Asser and Æthelweard record the defence of a fortification (the ramparts of which Asser records as 'constructed in our fashion' [*nostro more erecta*]), suggesting an Iron Age hillfort). Like the *Chronicle*, Asser attributes victory to the king's thegns (*ministri regis*) but indicates that the defence of the fortification was successful through a tactic of suddenly bursting out (*irrupunt*) of the ramparts in a manner which recalled both Alfred's leadership of a rapid assault of the Vikings at Ashdown in 871 and the Vikings' sudden outburst (*erumpentes*) from their fortification at Reading in the same year.²⁴ The fact that none of these actions is recorded with these details in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (for the accounts of Ashdown and Reading, as with some details of *Cynuit*, we must rely on Asser) highlights the way in which multiple narratives of West Saxon history were being forged in the later ninth century.²⁵ Æthelweard does not relate the details provided by Asser, and indeed records that '[i]n the end the Danes held the field of victory' (*Postremo uictoria obtinent locum etiam Dani*), but,

in recording the key role of holding a fortification, leading to the death of 'king of the barbarians' (*barbarum rex*), Æthelweard attributes significant credit to Odda in the narrative of West Saxon victory. This was evidently seen as an important episode in the history of West Saxon and Danish relations as experienced by one ealdorman in the ninth century and perceived by another who may have linked the events of the ninth century with his own political position in the late tenth century.

We might note here the possibility that, as Ann Williams has tentatively proposed elsewhere, Odda was an ancestor of Æthelweard,²⁶ an issue made all the more interesting by her other suggestion, based on patterns of patronage and naming, that a later Odda (also known as Æthelwine), an eleventh-century earl of the south-western provinces for a brief period between 1051–2, may have been descended from Æthelweard, and that his cognomen was linked to the descent from the ninth-century Odda which this relationship implied.²⁷ The connection between the hero of *Cynuit* and the scribbling tenth-century ealdorman is, admittedly, speculative but that between Æthelweard and the later Odda is less so (though at least one scholar has questioned it).²⁸ If these figures are lined up between the ninth and eleventh centuries, they illuminate a continuity in the attitude to the defences of the southern and south-western coasts, in which the eleventh-century Odda's defence (at least on his behalf, as he had been sent to Sandwich with the fleet) can be seen as an organised action against what was effectively a Viking attack on the northern coast of Somerset from Ireland by Harold Godwineson in 1052.²⁹

Of course, one could hardly say that Æthelweard would have foreseen the politics of mid-eleventh-century Wessex, just as it is arguably as misleading to rely entirely on his view of the importance of an earlier south-western ealdorman. But to consider his view is not without merit. Although the worst of the Viking raids of the 'Second Viking Age' lay in the future when Æthelweard wrote, the threat of piratical raids was still tangible in the reign of

Edgar.³⁰ Given that coastal watch in Æthelweard's Cornwall estate was evidently important by 977, Æthelweard may not have been oblivious to the significance of the actions of his ninth-century predecessor and if tentative suggestions of a familial link may be extended, Odda's inclusion in Æthelweard's account of the ninth-century defence of Wessex could have been an attempt to set a familial record of local defence straight in the face of a royal tradition which seems to have edged out Æthelweard's branch of the royal family.³¹ The point is one of perceived continuity: of links with the past which were maintained and nurtured because of a sense of the future. Shashi Jayakumar has drawn attention to the manner in which the court politics of the reign of Eadwig (955–9) were linked to the positions of the wider royal family from two generations earlier.³² The stretch between generations is longer in the case tentatively proposed here but each of these ealdormen, well-connected to the royal family as part of what might be termed the Anglo-Saxon *Königsnahe*, evidently knew the significance of dealing with Danes and the place of Vikings in the formation of the English kingdom, and the significance of this in their own place within the wider royal kindred. Such a sense of the connections between generations is a significant enough premise from which to proceed.

Dealing with Danes in Wessex

Two events which occurred (or, in one case, which was likely to have occurred) in Æthelweard's lifetime are suggestive of norms of behaviour in dealings with 'Danes', whether from Denmark or elsewhere, in the south of England in the late tenth century. The fact that these events are likely to have occurred after the composition of the version of the *Chronicon* sent to Matilda is instrumental in this discussion as it will be argued that, with Æthelweard's role apparent in at least one, arguably both, of these events, his frames of reference of relations with Vikings can be used to illuminate the English perceptions of the events themselves,

with the first event shedding light on the second. The first is Æthelweard's role in a peace treaty agreed through the confirmation of the Norwegian leader, Olaf Tryggvason, at Andover, Hampshire, which may have taken place either in the autumn of 993 (*i.e.* 994 by the contemporary reckoning of the calendar) or in the spring of 994. The second is the killing of more than fifty individuals on the Ridgeway in Dorset, around the end of the tenth century. In the remainder of this chapter, I will consider the two in context.

The 'Treaty of Andover'

To consider first the peace treaty, we are perhaps fortunate that there is a coincidence of the documentary records associated with the events. A peace treaty survives, known as *II Æthelred*, recorded in two separate post-Conquest legal compilations.³³ While the A manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* notes the making of peace in a marginal continuation for a 993 entry, the circumstances of peacemaking – or rather its final agreement – are recorded in detail in the CDE manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under the year 994. A degree of uncertainty may be admitted about whether the events in Andover took place in the autumn of 993 or in the following year,³⁴ but we are left in no doubt about the significance of the peace agreement. This entry related that Ælfheah, then bishop of Winchester, and Æthelweard were sent to receive Olaf Tryggvason, referred to as 'King Olaf' in the *Chronicle*:

Then the king sent Bishop Ælfheah and Ealdorman Æthelweard for King Olaf and hostages were given to the ships meanwhile. And they then brought Olaf to the king at Andover with much ceremony, and King Æthelred stood sponsor to him at confirmation, and bestowed gifts on him royally. And then Olaf promised – as also he performed it – that he would never come back to England in hostility.³⁵

Hostages had been given by the English, probably through the agency of Bishop Ælfheah and Ealdorman Æthelweard, suggesting that Olaf's presence in Andover was negotiated and did not

represent a submission as such.³⁶ Furthermore, Niels Lund has noted that Olaf's royal title, recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, is unlikely to have been attained prior to his return to Norway, as Olaf was likely to have been in service to Swein Forkbeard, exercising what Lund calls 'the traditional Danish overlordship of Norway'.³⁷ Still, if the Chronicler used a royal epithet incorrectly, its use was hardly beyond the spirit of the occasion, and in the manner in which Louis the Pious and Alfred had elevated the status of earlier Danish figures to kingly positions (albeit with varying success), it could not have harmed King Æthelred's prestige.

The notion of the royal importance of the event is indicated by the *Chronicle's* reference to the fact that Olaf was brought to King Æthelred at Andover. The phrase which is used to convey the manner of Olaf's arrival at Andover, *mid miclum wurðscipe*, 'with much ceremony', indicates that in the midst of what were seen as the tribulations of Æthelred's reign, the Chronicler thought much of the occasion, making conscious links with the prestige of the conversion of Guthrum and peacemaking recorded in the 878 annal of the *Chronicle*.³⁸ Variations on *mid miclum wurðscipe* occur twice elsewhere in those annals of the *Chronicle* which refer to Æthelred and Cnut's reigns: in the account of the transporting of the body of the martyred King Edward from Wareham to Shaftesbury in 979, and in the D manuscript's account of the audience from the Pope received by Archbishop Æthelnoth of Canterbury in 1022, both occasions in which prestige – or its absence – was noteworthy.³⁹ This phrase, with the reference to (implied) gifts 'royally given' (*cynelice gifode*) to Olaf in the 994 entry of the CDE manuscripts, strongly suggests that here the Chronicler's tone was not ironic.⁴⁰ One might wonder whether, as with the reference to the relative successes of Ulfkell Snilling in East Anglia in 1004, stymied at the last hurdle, events were seen by the Chronicler as a lost opportunity, as a case of what might have been.⁴¹ In 1004, a lack of numbers had allegedly prevented the English from pressing home their advantage; in

the case of Olaf, the Chronicler's likely knowledge of the untimely death of Æthelred's new godson, Olaf, in Scandinavia in 999 probably lay behind the verdict that Olaf promised (*behet*), 'as he performed it' (*swa he hit eac gelaste*) that he would never come to the *Angelcynn* – the English rather than just the land of the English – 'in hostility' (*mid unfriðe*).

The circumstances of the peace treaty were significant, coming out of a campaign led by Olaf and Swein Forkbeard in southern England in the early autumn of (probably) 993.⁴² Following an attack on London and coastal places, an agreement was likely to have been made at some place in southern England which was not necessarily in the West Saxon heartlands. The *Chronicle* records that after that agreement the Viking force spent the winter at Southampton, with Olaf (presumably with the others named in *II Æthelred*, Jostein and Guthmund) coming to Andover for his confirmation, and with King Æthelred as sponsor (*his anfang at biscepes handa*). This may have taken place in 994, after the force had over-wintered, perhaps in the spring or even Easter – given the later Norwegian tradition of an annual Easter retelling of Olaf's story by Edward the Confessor (1042–66).⁴³ The Chronicler's use of 'then' as a temporal marker delineating the royal mission of Bishop Ælfheah and Ealdorman Ælfheah to Olaf (?at Southampton) may imply that the act of overwintering preceded their rendezvous with Olaf, and thus Olaf's confirmation happened after the winter, but it is not necessarily so. Given that hostages were sent by the English to the Viking ships 'meanwhile' (*þa hwile*), late 993 is just as plausible for these events, suggesting that the confirmation took place after the ships' crews had encamped at Southampton but before they had spent the winter there: in view of the relatively short distances involved, a slow pace of movement, negotiation, and further movement, does not have to be assumed, even in late autumn or early winter.⁴⁴ Olaf's confirmation was probably an important part of the final peace agreement, which, while not being something which could be rushed, had to be done in order to ratify it, to ensure that

the settlement at Southampton remained within a *frið*, i.e. within the terms of a peace agreement.

Æthelweard himself does not appear to have been the main player in these events but his sensitivity to the Norse language and Scandinavian culture, noted by Townend, can hardly have been unhelpful.⁴⁵ Consideration of his position is useful for understanding the course of events and their implications for Anglo-Scandinavian relations. Although, as noted above, it was likely to have been written before the events of the 990s, Æthelweard's *Chronicon* also provides insights into the possible perceptions and actions of the ealdorman and those around him in 993/94. Æthelweard's attitude to a need to draw up a peace agreement may be indicated by the fact that, in contrast to the ninth-century *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s record of events, Æthelweard records a group of Vikings besieged on Thorney Island (probably near Iwer, Bucks.) in 893, requesting and being granted a written peace agreement, arguably from Ealdorman Æthelred (referred to, in what may be a telling slip, as *rex*) rather than from the young and probably rather inexperienced Ætheling Edward, whom he had come to help.⁴⁶ As if to underline the significance of the relationship between peace and a written agreement, Æthelweard adds that '[d]eed and word together were completed at the same time' (*actus et sermo simul una complentur*).⁴⁷

At another point in his account of the events of the ninth century, Æthelweard provides the only known Anglo-Saxon account of a renewal of hostages; the detail, noting events in 885, is brief, recording only that hostages were 'renewed' (*renouant*) by 'those left behind' (*omissi*) and ultimately relating it to the renewal of hostilities.⁴⁸ As I have commented elsewhere, it is a revealing detail on hostage-exchange that the main version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not include.⁴⁹ Hostages were a normal tool for the making of agreements, and the *Chronicon*'s detail here is remarkable, given the brief details that we know of an exchange of hostages prior to the meeting at Andover. Æthelweard and many of those with him could hardly have been

unaware that a century earlier, hostage-exchange had also been a necessary part of the political interaction with Danes; therefore it may have assumed greater significance prior to the events at Andover than is normally acknowledged.

As a number of commentators have noted, the political significance of events at Andover stemmed from their religious context.⁵⁰ It is sometimes assumed that Olaf had been baptised at Andover⁵¹ but the fact that the *Chronicle* records only the Norwegian's confirmation is probably indicative of his baptism elsewhere at an earlier occasion (an issue discussed below). Confirmation itself was important enough. It was important enough to be presided over by a bishop and was a rite which, as Joseph Lynch noted, could be used to create spiritual kinship for diplomatic purposes.⁵² Customarily, there was a delay between baptism and confirmation which allowed for the later development of familial kinship strategies, but adult confirmation seems to have been rare by the late Anglo-Saxon period.⁵³ Nonetheless, these were customs which Æthelweard was well aware of. As Lynch observed, Æthelweard provides evidence for the creation of kinship relations through sponsorship at confirmation, as, when describing King Alfred's childhood trip to Rome, Æthelweard wrote about the custom, current (*modo*) in his own day, of referring to those received 'under the bishop's hand' (*sub manu episcopi*) as sons.⁵⁴

Still, the relationship with the party who presented the confirmand to the bishop was not the only relationship (or even necessarily the most important relationship) created in these circumstances. It is also to Æthelweard that we owe the information naming his predecessor for the ealdormanry of Somerset, Æthelnoth, as the party involved with the sponsorship of the previous recorded confirmation of a Dane in Wessex, that of Guthrum in 878. After Alfred's sponsorship of Guthrum's baptism at Aller (Som.), Æthelnoth 'also' (*pariter*; the implication of equality may be intentional) 'purified him after baptism' (*abluit post lauacrum eundum*), a few miles away at Wedmore.⁵⁵

Lynch logically links this with Æthelnoth's sponsorship of the 'unbinding of the chrism' (*crismlising*, *chrismatis solutio*; i.e. the cloth used to cover the chrism with which the confirmand is marked *after* baptism⁵⁶) recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and by Asser, which took place a week after the baptism.⁵⁷

While Æthelweard himself was not recorded as sponsor to Olaf's confirmation (the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* specifies King Æthelred in that role), it is important to note that an account of the 878 baptism and confirmation was described by someone who knew how to deal with Vikings to the extent that he was jointly responsible for peace negotiation and Olaf's escort to Andover. If, in the 990s, anyone outside the episcopate knew that sponsorship was something which could be politically meaningful, Æthelweard was one. It is not unreasonable to speculate on whether Æthelweard, given the role of earlier ealdormen in this process, came to Andover prepared for the task of sponsorship, undertook the task or simply acted as sponsor for some of those with Olaf, such as Jostein, a man named in the *II Æthelred* peace agreement. (It is tempting to make the link with Olaf's uncle, Jostein, who, according to the late twelfth-century Norwegian writer Theodoricus *Monachus*, travelled to Britain to meet his nephew after Olaf's conversion there⁵⁸) The fact that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not mention Æthelweard as a sponsor need not be evidence that he did not play such a role; the fact that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 878 did not name Ealdorman Æthelnoth, while Æthelweard *did* name him, alluding to his role, is indication enough of how different narratives were shaped in such circumstances. After all, Ælfric, the ealdorman of Hampshire/ eastern Wessex, named in the preamble to the *II Æthelred* treaty, receives no mention in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, despite Andover's position within his ealdormanry, presumably because the competence that it would thus imply would have undermined the Chronicler's attempts to associate him with English defeats in other annal entries.⁵⁹

Regardless of whether Ealdorman Ælfric was

also present at Andover, following the deaths of Byrthnoth of Essex (d.991) and Æthelwine of East Anglia (d.992), Æthelweard was the senior ealdorman in 993 and 994,⁶⁰ and so he would hardly have been unequal to the sponsorship of Olaf himself. If so – and it is a strong possibility that the elder statesman would have done so from amongst the younger men – it was possible to have sponsorship alongside that of the English king. In the twelfth/thirteenth-century Norwegian law compilations, the *Older Law of the Gulathing* and *Older Law of the Frostathing*, the sponsorship of the loosening of a chrism cloth was recorded as the 'fifth' form of spiritual kinship, which meant a prohibition on marriage to someone in that relationship.⁶¹ This 'fifth' form followed (logically) the 'fourth' form of kinship linking the confirmand with the party who led the confirmand to the bishop. The other forms of kinship related to baptismal rather than confirmational sponsorship; although the forms of kinship detailed in the *Frostathing* were theoretically of equal importance, the fact that the law *asserts* that they were of equal importance (thus making the point that a prohibition on marriage was a prohibition on marriage) suggests that some relationships which emerged from spiritual sponsorship were naturally likely to have been perceived as more equal than others. As Æthelred acted as Olaf's sponsor at confirmation, he presumably undertook that higher, fourth form of sponsorship. The 'fifth' form of sponsorship, evidently provided by Ealdorman Æthelnoth for Guthrum in 878, seems a logical (if symbolic) role for Æthelweard. Sponsorship at confirmation allowed for the creation of *multiple* networks of spiritual kinship, not just a relationship between one sponsor and the confirmand, and, as such, it is likely to have meant something tangible for Æthelweard as well as for Olaf and Æthelred.⁶²

It is also worth considering whether Olaf had already received baptism – or 'primesigning', *i.e.* a preliminary baptism which made interactions with Christians acceptable⁶³ – some time before his arrival

in Andover, even before his arrival in England. Olaf's later pressure upon Iceland to convert to Christianity under his terms may be characteristic of the zeal of the recent convert, suggesting that confirmation had not long followed baptism.⁶⁴ This would fit well with the twelfth-century Norwegian tradition of Olaf having been baptised in the Scilly Isles during his campaigns in the British Isles.⁶⁵ The detail is interesting, especially given that the Scilly Isles probably fell within the sphere of influence of the south-western ealdormanry for which Æthelweard was responsible. However, as Peter Sawyer has noted, the details of Olaf's baptism are 'late and conflicting'. This issue should give us reason to pause.⁶⁶ Given the activities of Christian missionaries in tenth-century Scandinavia, Olaf may well have already been baptised there before he arrived in England in 993/94, either as a result of the work of English missionaries who had been in Norway from the reign of Edgar (or before)⁶⁷ or as a result of an existing political relationship with the Danish king. Taking the latter suggestion, if Olaf had come to England as the subordinate of a Danish overlord, perhaps Swein Forkbeard, as a Christian Danish ruler (Swein's traditional reputation as a rebel leader of a pagan revival against his Christian father is undeserved), had overseen Olaf's initial conversion to Christianity as Olaf's overlord.⁶⁸ Olaf's confirmation by Æthelred thus represented a subversion – within *Christian* norms – of that Danish overlordship. The argument is, of course, somewhat circular, but it has a good deal to commend it. Such an interpretation is perhaps supported by Olaf's later resistance to Swein in Scandinavia, which resulted in his eventual death in 999: *i.e.* a Danish-Norwegian royal rivalry, in which the English missionaries who accompanied Olaf to Norway played more than bit parts.⁶⁹

This all has significance for the Norwegian leader's treaty with Æthelweard and his fellow ealdorman, Ælfric of Hampshire/eastern Wessex, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sigeric, recorded as an agreement which had been made prior to its codification in the *II Æthelred* treaty.

(Considering the likely date of the death of Sigeric in October 994, his presence at the making of the preliminary treaty is all the more likely if it took place in the autumn of the previous year, and old age may explain his absence in Andover.⁷⁰) Treaties with pagan Vikings were, as had been seen in the ninth century, well nigh impossible on anything but the shortest of terms; a treaty was more workable when it was made with a Christian, or rather a Christian whose outward manifestation of spiritual kinship could be linked to the political processes associated with baptism and/or confirmation.⁷¹ The *II Æthelred* treaty records that Æthelweard and his colleagues had royal permission (*abædon at ðam cyng*) to 'buy peace for the areas which they, subject to the king, had rule over' (*þæt hy mostan ðam læppan frið gebicgean, ðe hy under cyngre hand ofer hæfdon*).⁷² In view of the localised nature of defence, and indeed the devolved nature of an imperial strain of royal authority advocated in *Wyrðwriteras*, a text written around that time by one of Æthelweard's correspondents, Ælfric, on the nature of authority, the peacemaking here was undertaken on a similar footing.⁷³ Evidently, this had not been a desperate act of throwing money at a group of Vikings but a negotiation was possible on normal terms, with the usual expectations of the fulfilment of conditions.⁷⁴ Niels Lund has characterised the *II Æthelred* treaty as a contract for mercenary service, an interpretation which seems logical considering the potential for a role played by the Solent and the Isle of Wight in the defence of Wessex.⁷⁵ However, although the implications of the practicalities of peace are important and will be discussed in the next section, there was evidently more to the ceremony itself. Lund has indicated that the peace treaty was a classic attempt at divide and rule but we should also note that the Norwegians, through the peace treaty, had become the *king's* 'Danes', with notions of status associated with them, just as Pierre Bauduin notes for an earlier generation of converted Danes for the prestige – and indeed power – of Frankish rulers.⁷⁶

In the 990s the English parties were in a

reasonable position to determine the course of events (at least to an extent). Perhaps, given the currency of Viking *ruses de guerre* (or their reputation),⁷⁷ there were quite practical arguments for not bringing a Viking leader and his men into what had become one of the richest settlements of the kingdom. This may be a further indication of Æthelred's reasoning for not bringing Olaf into Winchester for his confirmation, and, if Southampton played host to the Viking encampment, there would have been no sense of majesty to the occasion if the English king had to go there (not to mention the loss of face it would have entailed).⁷⁸ Considering the key role of bishops in confirmation and the record of Bishop Ælfheah in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*,⁷⁹ the bishop's seat at Winchester would have been a logical location for the ceremony,⁸⁰ but other factors are important, not least the fact that confirmation did not *have* to take place at the bishop's seat.⁸¹ Bauduin notes the centrality of hunting and feasting for the accord reached with the Emperor Louis the Pious's convert Dane, Harald Klak, at Ingelheim in 826, something which, given the significance of assembly to Frankish politics, was emphasised in Ermoldus Nigellus' poem on the event.⁸² The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not give any similar emphasis in the account of the baptism of Guthrum in 878 but one can hardly expect the parties to have sat in contemplative silence for a week between baptism and unbinding of the chrism after confirmation.⁸³ Despite the obvious difference from ninth- and tenth-century Wessex in terms of its poetically-recorded opulence, Ingelheim may be invoked here, where, as well as hunting, Harald Klak confirmed his status as a Christian in a manner which also affirmed Louis's imperial authority;⁸⁴ Wedmore and Andover were similarly both places redolent with royal authority. John Blair has made a strong case for considering Wedmore's near neighbour, the estate centre of Cheddar, to have been a minster site brought under the control of West Saxon kings from the later ninth century onwards, through the foundation of its hunting lodge.⁸⁵ Cheddar's role in tenth-century politics, recorded in the *Vita*

Dunstani, makes it one of a few places explicitly associated with royal hunting and, given that it and a number of nearby estates, including Wedmore, are in Alfred's will as bequests to his eldest son, the landscape around may have been of more than passing interest to bored aristocrats.⁸⁶

Andover is in the will of Æthelred's great-uncle, King Eadred (946–55), one of three Hampshire *hama* bequeathed to the New Minster,⁸⁷ and the landscape around is known for its significance as a hunting ground, a factor noted, though not specifically in relation to the Andover region, in Patrick Wormald's discussion of the late Anglo-Saxon legislative landscape.⁸⁸ I have commented elsewhere on the significance of the landscape in the hundred of Andover, wherein an assembly took place at nearby Grateley in the second quarter of the tenth century.⁸⁹ Pleasant though the Test Valley may be, any sense of royal progress from Southampton to Andover can hardly have been intended to overawe Olaf and men from the Norwegian fjords; the journey, which involved the movement of the Viking (and future spiritual kinsman), was probably intended to convey a quasi-imperial prestige. Olaf was 'brought' (*læddon*) to King Æthelred, an action which may have also served to emphasise the agency of Bishop Ælfheah and Ealdorman Æthelweard in undertaking this task.⁹⁰

Another look at the 'Death on the Ridgeway'

Such actions as those described above were performative. Whether Vikings were forgiven or were indeed brought into a Christian fold with newly-created familial links, as was indicated by the promulgation of law at Enham in 1008, a 'place of the lambs' (OE = *Eān-ham*) also within the royal estate of Andover, places became specifically associated with events, deriving their meaning through such events.⁹¹ The second event, associable with Æthelweard not by text but by circumstance and, arguably, place, is the execution of more than fifty individuals, whose remains were found in Dorset in 2009. Although a range of possible contexts for this event have been acknowledged,

discussed and occasionally dismissed for this archaeological event,⁹² a connection, albeit indirect, with the events of 993/94 is proposed here.

On the Dorset coast of Wessex, in what was, for some time, within the area of jurisdiction of Ealdorman Æthelweard and, later, that of his son Ealdorman Æthelmær, the relationship between West Saxons and Danes – between English and 'Other' – was re-established. That relationship evidently manifested itself in the most violent way possible, indicating that while accommodation was feasible and indeed common, there were limits to that accommodation. Although elsewhere in this volume Angela Boyle notes the physiological limitations of a small number of those found in the burial pit, the number of those found is commensurate with the size of a crew (or at least an oar-worthy crew) of one of the large warships of the tenth and eleventh centuries.⁹³ Even with little evidence of extensive pre-mortem or peri-mortem *combat* injuries in the skeletal material,⁹⁴ the largely or (probably) entirely male composition of the group, the tooth modification undertaken by one, suggesting that he deliberately objectified himself as 'other',⁹⁵ and the difference of the circumstances of the burials from other known execution cemeteries in early medieval England suggest that these individuals had been *Viking* in both the adjectival and the verbal sense of the word.

The antithesis of the grand gestures of reconciliation and entertainment of Danes at royal courts was the manifestation of royal anger – seasoned with a generous sprinkling of justice – against those who had been seen to have transgressed the norms of a just and civilised society.⁹⁶ According to a short but detailed account in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* of a naval battle on the south coast of England and its aftermath in 896, King Alfred had the Danish crews of captured ships hanged in Winchester, evidently establishing that these men were pirates.⁹⁷ This was itself a suitably grand gesture, reflecting an almost imperial notion of defence against pirates, like that alluded to in Einhard's portrayal of the defence of the Frankish

realm 'at all the ports and at the mouth of every river that seemed large enough to accommodate ships' (*per omnes portus et ostia fluminum qua naves recipi posse videbantur*) by Charlemagne.⁹⁸ Were the actions taken against the Ridgeway Vikings a similar gesture, undertaken by someone acting on behalf of royal authority?

The fact that the carbon-dating of the Ridgeway skeletons provides an almost certain *terminus post-quem* of 970⁹⁹ suggests that the victims of the Ridgeway executions were not associated with the many events which happened in Dorset in the ninth century, placing them squarely in the period under consideration here. The *II Æthelred* treaty of 993 or 994 seems to relate directly to the circumstances of the capture of a ship's crew, in terms of either the establishment or the aftermath of the making of the law. Clause 2 of the treaty has it:

And every trading ship [*ceapscip*] which enters a *muð* [estuary?] is to have peace, even if it is an *unfrið*-ship, providing it is not driven [*undripen bið*] ashore.¹⁰⁰

The notion of the Old English *drifan* is relevant here, as there have been a number of interpretations of this clause. To Dorothy Whitelock, following Felix Liebermann, the term referred to the wrecking of a vessel, but to A. J. Robertson the use of *drifan* implied that the ship was pursued.¹⁰¹ While the wrecking of the vessel may not be excluded from this definition, it does not seem to be in the interests of the treaty. In *Alfred's Wars*, I had tended toward considering it a deliberate driving ashore (*i.e.* a vessel bent on raiding). On further reflection for this chapter, I now have to concede an inclination toward Robertson's interpretation, as *drifan* is a term which implies that a force is exerted on something by an external agency, as indicated, for example, in its use in the *Old English Orosius*.¹⁰² Driving an enemy vessel to the coast or riverbank seems to have been the aim of Anglo-Saxon naval warfare within coastal waters, indicated by *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entries for 896 and the events of 1052,¹⁰³ so this may contextualise the use of the verb *drifan* in *II Æthelred*.

We should also note the subsequent clause in *II Æthelred*, which relates to the extension of the *frið* to those from an *unfrið*-ship which had been driven ashore *if* they managed to reach a *burh* belonging to the peace (here *burh* may have a broader meaning than a fortified town). If this were a simple explanation of Viking raiders, one would hardly expect the conditions of peace to be activated upon their arrival at a potential target! Thus, the fate of a captured crew would normally be subject to legal judgement, as took place so dramatically in 896.

Although, as observed above, much can be said about the symbolic importance of events at Andover in 993/94, Lund's very practical consideration of the establishment of a relationship between parties in the *II Æthelred* treaty is invaluable for the treaty's context and implications. The treaty remained, to all intents and purposes, a contract. Therefore there were people outside the contract. As Lund notes, the crew of an *unfrið*-ship as defined in the *II Æthelred* treaty were not enemies *per se*; like those traders in Biarmaland, described by Ohthere in the *Old English Orosius*, they were simply without peace.¹⁰⁴ But the result was the same. Were the Ridgeway Vikings a group who had been executed prior to the making of such a treaty or the unlucky victims of circumstance, having arrived in the expectation of rich pickings in the aftermath of a campaign and discovering that they would be treated as the crew of an *unfrið*-ship, whatever their circumstances? Presumably we will never know but a link between the treaty and the unfortunate Ridgeway individuals is not unlikely, whether the date of *II Æthelred* be treated as a *terminus ante quem* or *terminus post quem*. Given the significance of providing for or even anticipating a range of contingencies in Æthelred's early legislation,¹⁰⁵ the circumstances may not have been unconnected, even if this ship's crew represented one group among many; they were either a group whose transgression of legally expected norms had *contributed* to the circumstances in which the *II Æthelred* treaty was



Figure 8.1. View of Portland and its harbour from Ridgeway Hill. (Photograph © Bob Ford 2004, <http://www.natureportfolio.co.uk>)

drawn up or they were a group whose execution resulted from it.

Boyle notes the geographical significance of the site in terms of both the royal and the legal landscape; this is a matter which warrants further reflection. The Ridgeway burials seem to have been close to Broadwey, which in 1066 consisted of small (assessed at six hides or less) thegnly and royal estates, recorded with the rather common place-name 'Wey'.¹⁰⁶ Cullifordtree Hundred, in which they stood, seems to have been dominated by royal estate organisation, both at Portland and at Sutton Poyntz.¹⁰⁷ The latter of these was linked to a multiple estate unit, focused on Dorchester, recorded as providing a night's farm, a render which seems to have been linked with royal authority.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the coastal location is surely not coincidental. The view of the coast from the hill is striking. That very fact, alongside the fact that the first Viking raid on Wessex took place *c.*789 at Portland, a place visible from the Ridgeway Hill, surely links to the symbolism of the execution of

ship crews, especially given that Æthelweard, as we have noted, recorded this event in such detail (and, when he wrote of the event, may have experienced another attack on Portland in 982).

In this geographical context, *II Æthelred's* reference to those who arrive at a *muð* (clause 2) deserves consideration. In 1943, Francis Magoun noted, with regard to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* 896 entry, which also used the term, that the Old English *muð* seems to have had wider connotations than just an 'estuary'; it could also signify the entrance to a port, *i.e.* the area of water leading from an estuary,¹⁰⁹ in fact just the kinds of bodies of water that Einhard had recorded Charlemagne as defending.¹¹⁰ The qualities of the natural harbour to the west of Portland, whose role in Olympic sailing events partly necessitated the 2009 excavation in advance of the building of a relief road, may have made it one such *muð*. That Portland and its harbour, and indeed a distance beyond, were within visual contact of the Ridgeway burials is worthy of note (see Figure 8.1),¹¹¹ and the execution site's

closeness to the source of the River Wey, whence the *muð* came, at Upwey, at the foot of the Downs just over a kilometre away may have had symbolic importance in terms of a determination of the control of the landscape.

Conclusions

It is appropriate to close with acknowledgement that the evidence for Æthelweard's culpability in the execution of the group at the Ridgeway is circumstantial at best. The absence in Æthelweard's *Chronicon* of an equivalent episode to that recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 896 may reflect an absent entry in Æthelweard's source text¹¹² but it may be a result of his choice of what to include: the 896 entry was concerned with royal action and with ships of a type which may no longer have been in operation by the tenth century; it was a single, isolated episode which may have been of less interest, as it had fewer implications, to Æthelweard's audience than the grander episodes of West Saxon history. If so, and *if* Æthelweard (or his son and successor Æthelmær) were behind the executions, it might show that what happened on the Ridgeway was less an attempt to resurrect a specific episode of Alfredian authority on the south coast than a reflection of the general message of authority that such an action communicated. In any case, notwithstanding some hypothetical future attempt to build a southern English equivalent of the *Sachsenshain* memorial to the Frankish massacre of pagan Saxons at Verden in 784,¹¹³ for the purposes of this chapter such culpability should not matter. The preceding discussion has established that peace and other forms of Anglo-Scandinavian relations took place at local and regional levels, though the notion of royal authority and status was never far from the surface. A number of interesting dynamics concerning the relationship between individuals emerge. Some of those individuals are anonymous; some are named and well-recorded, and show the interstices between texts, events, and material remains. These individuals arguably link

across the Viking period, too: from the first Viking raid to later Alfredian responses; to an ealdorman whose position in the reign of Æthelred II and education during the earlier reign of Edgar owed so much to Alfredian reform; through to the tangled politics of the reign of Edward the Confessor.

While there remains some debate regarding whether Æthelweard himself was the author of the *Chronicon*, its authorial voice or merely someone who took credit for commissioning it, it is instructive that a reading of the *Chronicon* casts some interesting light on the context of the Andover agreement. We can see some consensus of responses to 'Danes' (particularly a southern English consensus). The peace treaty may not have been his achievement *per se*, especially considering the likely role of Bishop Ælfheah, but Æthelweard was not out of tune with late tenth-century responses to Danes in Wessex. In the light of what we know of the execution of a group of likely Vikings, such responses could manifest themselves with remarkable clarity.

Appendix: the Size of a Ship's Crew in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries

If approximately fifty-two individuals can be reckoned to have been executed at Ridgeway Hill,¹¹⁴ a consideration of the extent to which they are likely have constituted a ship's crew is worthwhile, though whether they were the entire complement of a twenty-five bench vessel is debateable.¹¹⁵ Discussing Skuldelev 2, a vessel from the mid eleventh century, Ole Crumlin-Pederson plausibly suggests, from calculations of the length of the vessel and the size of the frame stations, sixty men as rowers: 'With the helmsman and additional crew members such as look-outs, *etc.*, a full crew would then number ca 65 men who served as seamen onboard and warriors ashore.'¹¹⁶ Given the narrow beam-length ratio of Skuldelev 2, it appears likely that, notwithstanding some disabilities amongst some of their number, the majority of those on board a

ship such as Skuldelev 2 served as rowers, at least when the occasion demanded.¹¹⁷

There is evidence of other vessels from the period. Although of course they cannot be considered as 'Danish' ships, textual references to late Anglo-Saxon ships are suggestive of Skuldelev 2-size vessels.¹¹⁸ Although more contemporary to the events of the late tenth century (dated to c.985), and of similar length to Skuldelev 2, with a similar-sized crew, Hedeby 1, a longship with an even higher length-beam ratio, is considered "a longship of royal standard", designed for high-speed sailing and rowing in relatively protected waters',¹¹⁹ and thus is unlikely to have been of a type to have travelled to England. Another large vessel, Roskilde 6, measuring 37 m from bow to stern, was on a larger scale. Its crew, estimated at over eighty, was probably larger than those of other vessels.¹²⁰ However, Roskilde 6 was perhaps an exceptionally large high-status (probably royal) vessel; crews in the region of fifty to seventy are likely to have been the norm.

Notes

1. I wish to record my thanks to Karl Alvestad, Frode Iversen, Courtney Konshuh, Simon Roffey and Barbara Yorke for their helpful criticisms, comments, and insights regarding issues arising from this paper. All errors that remain are, of course, my own.
2. For the notion of a 'second Viking Age', see P. H. Sawyer, 'The Two Viking Ages of Britain: A Discussion', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 2 (1969), pp. 163–76, with discussion and author's response at pp. 176–207. See also the introduction to this volume, above, p. 2.
3. R. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 2–6 and 165–75.
4. An important – though sadly unpublished – study of the roles of ealdormen and their connections is L. N. Banton, 'Ealdormen and Earls in England from the Reign of King Alfred to the Reign of King Æthelred II' (Oxford Univ., DPhil thesis, 1981); although understandably focusing on Mercia in the eleventh century, the most recent detailed consideration of the political position of earls and ealdormen is S. Baxter, *The Earls of Mercia: Lordship and Power in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 61–124; the overview in H. R. Loyn, *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England, 500–1087* (London, 1984), especially pp. 131–2, remains invaluable.
5. He is styled 'Æðelweard Occidentalium Prouinciarum dux' in an Old Minster Winchester charter: Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 891 (AD 997).
6. For Æthelweard's life and career, see P. Wormald, 'Æthelweard (d. 998?)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8918>> (accessed 8 Aug. 2013) and S. Ashley, 'The Lay Intellectual in Anglo-Saxon England: Ealdorman Æthelweard and the Politics of History', in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. P. Wormald and J. L. Nelson (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 218–45. Æthelweard's links, as well as those of his family, with Ælfric are discussed in C. Cubitt, 'Ælfric's Lay Patrons', in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. M. Swan and H. Magennis (Leiden, 2009), pp. 165–92.
7. See Alistair Campbell's introduction to Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. xiii, n.2; M. Gretsch, 'Historiography and Literary Patronage in Late Anglo-Saxon England: the Evidence of Æthelweard's *Chronicon*', *ASE* 41 (2012), pp. 205–48, at p. 212.
8. WM, *GRA*, prologue, pp. 14–17. M. Winterbottom, 'The Style of Æthelweard', *Medium Ævum* 36 (1967), pp. 109–18. C. Konshuh, 'Warfare and Authority in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, c.891–924' (Winchester Univ., PhD thesis, 2014) makes a strong case for Æthelweard's ability to identify Old English formulas used in the *ASC*, rendering them into Latin, something that William was unable to achieve.
9. E.g. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, pp. 39, 40 ('Angli Occidentali'), and p. 52 ('Occidentalium... Anglorum'); Baxter, *Earls of Mercia*, p. 77, and Gretsch, 'Historiography and Literary Patronage', pp. 236–7, link such identifications to a broader sense of national unity. Cf. D. Pelteret, 'Should One Include Unnamed Persons in a Prosopographical Study?', in *Prosopography: Approaches and Applications: A Handbook*, ed. K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (Oxford, 2007), pp. 183–96, at p. 192, who suggests that this was in order to distinguish between the western Saxons in Germany and those in England. Pelteret's case is logical, especially considering the confusion arising from Æthelweard's nomenclature, but the explanations do not have to have been mutually exclusive.
10. M. Townend, *Language and History in Viking Age England: Linguistic Relations between Speakers of*

- Old Norse and Old English* (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 110–28 (quotation at p. 127).
11. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, pp. 49 (framing the limits of *Andredesweald*; Danes penetrating Wessex near Farnham (Surrey), later driven over the Thames 'to regions of the north' [*ad partes borel*]), 51 (setting out from Wessex), and 52 (West Saxon and Mercian boundary on streams of the River Avon).
 12. See Baxter *Earls of Mercia*, pp. 79–85.
 13. For Matilda and her kindred, see E. van Houts, 'Women and the Writing of History in the Early Middle Ages: the case of Abbess Matilda of Essen and Æthelweard', *EME* 1 (1992), pp. 53–68.
 14. F. M. Stenton, 'The South-Western Element of the Old English Chronicle', in his *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 106–15 and E. E. Barker, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle used by Æthelweard', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 60 (1967), pp. 74–91 (discussed by Barbara Yorke, in *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 106–107) for the notion that a vernacular chronicle used by the so-called 'Common Stock' of the *ASC* is closely related to the text used by Æthelweard. Baxter suggests that Æthelweard's *Chronicon* after 892 'may have been the fruit of his own curiosity, research, and historical imagination' (*Earls of Mercia*, pp. 80–81). Taking a different perspective, in analysis of the first two books of the *Chronicon* and noting that Æthelweard was considerably more wide-ranging in his use of texts than he is often given credit for, Gretsch ('Historiography and Literary Patronage', pp. 212–38), did not hypothesise a 'lost' version of the *ASC*, as such an explanation is not needed for the compilation and styling of material to suit Æthelweard's mode of narrative proposed by Gretsch.
 15. This is probably the case for the rebellion of the renegade Ætheling, Æthelwold (related to Æthelweard and Matilda through his father, King Æthelred I), whose initial attack on Hants/Dorset in 899/900 was (probably sensibly, given Matilda's need to legitimise her background), ignored by Æthelweard, and whose death at the Battle of the Holme was obfuscated while being tacitly acknowledged (Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 52, compared with *ASC* 899 and 902; see my 'Representing Authority in an Early Medieval Chronicle: Submission, Rebellion and the Limits of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, c.899–1065', in *Authority and Gender in Medieval and Renaissance Chronicles*, ed. J. Dresvina and N. Sparks (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2012), pp. 61–101, at p. 70). The lack of the participation of ealdormen at the naval battle of 896 (*ASC* 896), in contrast to other military encounters in this period, which involved ealdormen in some way, *may* explain its notable absence from the *Chronicon*.
 16. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 27. It should be noted that subtracting 334 years from 787 (the year of the *ASC*'s annal for the events of 789, which Æthelweard drew upon) results in the year 453, not the year of 449 ascribed in the *ASC* to the arrival of Hengest and Horsa, suggesting that the number 334 had some numerological or calendrical significance for Æthelweard or his informant. For interpretations of Æthelweard's reading of the arrival of Hengest and Horsa, removed from its Kentish context, see W. Jezierski, 'Æthelweardus redivivus', *EME* 13 (2005), pp. 159–78, at p. 165. Henry of Huntingdon's sense of the relationship between migrations/ invasions and divisions of British history are apparent in *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People*, ed. and trans. D. Greenway (Oxford, 1996), I.4 and V, preface, pp. 14–15 and 273–75; this theme, which develops Old Testament notions of the punishment of the sins of a people used by Gildas and Bede, is discussed in Greenway's edition at p. lix, and by N. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: the Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (London, 1977), pp. 22–28.
 17. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 27. D. Gore, 'A Review of Viking Attacks in Western England to the Early Tenth Century: Their Motives and Responses', above, pp. 56–57.
 18. Ninth- and tenth-century ealdormen named or detailed in Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, who are either not named or are recorded with less detail in corresponding *ASC* entries, are Hun, ealdorman of Somerset (825; Æthelweard, p. 29); Eanwulf, ealdorman of Somerset (867; p. 36); the burial of Æthelwulf, ealdorman of Berkshire, at Derby after a battle at Reading (871; p. 37); Æthelnoth, ealdorman of Somerset (878; pp. 42 and 43; 893, p. 51 [with a northern campaign]); Odda, ealdorman of Devon (878; p. 43); Æthelred, ealdorman of Mercia, referred to as *rex* (893; pp. 49 and 50); Æthelhelm, ealdorman of Wilts., referred to with *equestri* (893; p. 50; though this detail could be suppositional extrapolation); unnamed ealdorman of Mercia, recorded as driving out Olaf Sihtricsson and Ragnald Guthfrithsson from York (944; p. 54).
 19. The tensions in the reign of Æthelred, in this respect, are discussed by Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 136.

20. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 832 (AD 977). The 'south-western' implications of the charter are discussed in C. Insley, 'Athelstan, Charters and the English in Cornwall', in *Charters and Charter Scholarship in Britain and Ireland*, ed. M. T. Flanagan and J. Green (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 15–31, at pp. 21–23.
21. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 171–5. See also J. Baker and S. Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 183–84.
22. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 42; *ASC* 877.
23. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 43; Asser, ch. 54, pp. 43–44; trans. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of Alfred and other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983), pp. 83–84. Gore discusses the range of possibilities for the location of *Cynuit* in 'Review of Viking Attacks', above, pp. 62–63.
24. Asser, chs 36 and 38, pp. 27–30; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 78–79; the use of a fortification in this manner, as a place from which to launch an attack, is considered in Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 250–51.
25. A further indication of the development of a local tradition – albeit probably diverging from that of Æthelweard, as it attributes the agency to Alfred – is provided by Geffrei Gaimar in his *Estoire des Engleis: History of the English*, ed. and trans. I. Short (Oxford, 2009), lines 3144–56, pp. 172–73.
26. A. Williams, *Land, Power and Politics: The Family and Career of Odda of Deerhurst*, Deerhurst Lecture 1996 (Deerhurst, 1997), pp. 6–7.
27. Williams, *Land, Power and Politics*, pp. 4–5. Odda's appointment to Devon, Somerset, Dorset and Cornwall is recorded (in that order) in *ASC* E 1051. At p. 25, n. 35, Williams draws out discussion of another explanation for the cognomen, related to the Old English form of Otto; however, given that Æthelweard wrote for a woman of the Ottonian *Königsnahe*, for whom the name link may have been meaningful, the two explanations do not have to have been mutually exclusive.
28. T. Bolton, *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and the Consolidation of Power in Northern Europe in the Early Eleventh Century* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 30–31, although in the same discussion (p. 30), Bolton does admit the patronage of Pershore Abbey, a tenth-century foundation of Ealdorman Æthelweard, by Odda in the eleventh century.
29. *ASC* E 1052 contains the most details of the raids on the South-West, as well as Odda's appointment to the fleet. Given Portland's symbolic importance heralding the beginning of successive Viking raids in earlier generations, as discussed above, it is instructive to note that the 1052 annal also recorded an attack by Earl Godwine on Portland before a rendezvous with his son somewhere near the Isle of Wight. These actions are considered in context in Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 202–207.
30. S. Jayakumar, 'Some Reflections on the "Foreign Policies" of Edgar "the Peaceable"', *Haskins Society Journal* 10 (2001), pp. 17–37.
31. The direct attribution of the victory at *Cynuit* to Alfred seems to have been present by the twelfth century, in Geffrei Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis* (see n.25, above). I am grateful to Barbara Yorke for the observation that the less perceptive amongst her final-year undergraduates on her 'Alfred the Great' course at the University of Winchester attributed the victory at *Cynuit* to Alfred, suggesting that the author of the *ASC*'s 878 entry was successful in misdirection over a millennium after its composition. With the possible revisions of Odda's reputation in mind, it is worth noting Bernard Cornwell's fictionalised account of Odda's attempt to steal the glory in the aftermath of a deliberately mis-dated battle of *Cynuit* in his novel *The Pale Horseman* (London, 2005; paperback edn, 2006), pp. 4–12.
32. S. Jayakumar, 'The Politics of the English Kingdom, c.955–c.978' (Oxford Univ., DPhil thesis, 2001), pp. 23–27. The implications of this observation are discussed in my own 'The Politics of Rebellion: The Ætheling Æthelwold and West Saxon Royal Succession, 899–902', in *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: the Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, ed. P. Skinner (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 51–80, at p. 71.
33. F. Liebermann (ed.), *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle, 3 vols, 1903–16), Vol. 1, p. 220–27; trans. *EHD* 1, pp. 437–39. In line with the categorisation of other Anglo-Saxon lawcodes, *II Æthelred* is Liebermann's coinage, used by subsequent generations of historians in preference to the 'Treaty of Andover' referred to by J. M. Kemble, *The Saxons in England: A History of the English Commonwealth till the Period of the Norman Conquest* (London, 1849; 2nd edn, 2 vols, 1876), Vol. 2, p. 95.
34. *ASC* A 991/(993). While Whitelock, p. 82, n. 3 notes that this may be a misdated entry for 991, a case is made by Janet Bately for considering it to be a reference to events in 993, on the basis of the '93 ships' in MS A and '94 ships' in MSS CDEF, meaning that the A Chronicler would have conflated events at Maldon in 991 with those of 993 (J. Bately, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', in *The Battle of Maldon AD 991*, ed. D. Scragg (Oxford, 1991), pp.

- 37–50). It should therefore be noted that the CDE version assigns events from October 994 and 995, respectively, to 995 and 996 annal numbers, and places two sets of events, one of which took place in the north of England, with the year marker (*i.e.* ‘in this year’) under the marginal annal year of 993. There may be a further case for considering that the writer of the A MS got things broadly correct and the events of ‘994’, which began on 8 September (*i.e.* before the new year began on 25 September) but must have mostly taken place *after* the new year began in late autumn, could be assigned to 993 on a conventional calendar (thus the 994 on the CDE MSS was not, *strictu sensu*, incorrect! Cf. ASC CDE 1016, where events in November 1016 are placed in the 1016 annal, as they suit the narrative of that entry). For evidence of the date of death of Sigeric on 28 October 994 (not 995 as ASC CDE), see N. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), p. 383, n. 58. A brief discussion of the existence of different exemplars in the use of *her* (‘here’, *i.e.* ‘in this year’) in the annal for ASC CDE 986 is in K. O’Brien O’Keefe’s introduction to the *Collaborative Edition of ASC C*, p. lxiv.
35. ‘Þa sende se cyning æfter Anlæfe cynges Ælfheah bisceop 7 Eapelweard ealdorman, 7 man gislude þa hwile into scipum, 7 hi ða læddon Anlaf mid miclum wurðscipe to þam cyninge to Andrefon, 7 se cyning Æþelred hys onfeng æt bisceopes handa 7 him cynelice gyfode, 7 him ða Anlaf behet, eac swa gelæste, þæt næfre eft to Angelcynne mid unfryðe cuman nolde.’ ASC CDE 993/994.
 36. R. Lavelle, ‘The Use and Abuse of Hostages in Later Anglo-Saxon England’, *EME* 14 (2006), pp. 269–96, at pp. 288–89.
 37. N. Lund, ‘Ólaf Tryggvason (d. 999)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/49266>> (accessed 14 May 2013).
 38. I gratefully acknowledge Courtney Konshuh for noting the textual parallels with 878, as well as the suggestion that the 994 entry may be deliberately longer than those of Æthelred’s reign which had preceded it, perhaps helping to emphasise the prestige of the occasion. Courtney has usefully pointed out to me that the Æthelredian chronicler’s attitude toward Æthelred was less critical of the king himself than is normally assumed (an issue observed in her ‘Æthelred and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle’, *English Studies* 97 [forthcoming, 2016]).
 39. ASC DEF 979; 1022. The former entry echoes the burial without royal honours (‘butan ælcum cynelice wurðscipe’) of the king, following his murder the previous year (ASC DEF 978).
 40. Cf. ASC CDE 1006, which ironically refers to the ravaging of the countryside by Vikings as the burning of beacons (for which, see Baker and Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage*, p. 183).
 41. ASC CDE 1004. This is not, of course, alien to an Old English literary tradition: the *Battle of Maldon* poem (lines 100–29) uses the notion of initial success and hope to emphasise the disaster (and of course adversity in the face thereof) that followed: D. Scragg, ‘*The Battle of Maldon*’ [an edition and translation of the text], in *Battle of Maldon AD 991*, ed. Scragg, pp. 1–36, at pp. 22–23.
 42. Because of the importance of the 991 Battle of Maldon, the link between ASC CDE 994 and the *II Æthelred* peace treaty was formerly much debated (see, *e.g.*, the first edition of *EHD* 1, p. 401), and it is only in recent years that E. V. Gordon’s link between the two, in ‘The Date of Æthelred’s Treaty with the Vikings: Olaf Tryggvason and the Battle of Maldon’, *The Modern Language Review* 32 (1937), pp. 24–32, has been generally accepted. For a possible re-dating of events to the autumn of 993, see n.34, above.
 43. For this detail, in the *Great Saga of Olaf Tryggvason*, see T. M. Andersson, ‘The Viking Policy of Ethelred the Unready’, in *Anglo-Scandinavian England: Norse-English Relations in the Period Before the Conquest*, ed. J. D. Niles and M. Amodio, Old English Colloquium Series 4 (London, 1989), pp. 1–11, at p. 7.
 44. A comparison with the movements of King Raoul of the West Franks and his rival magnates in an area of Burgundy and Picardy (roughly comparable with the size of Wessex) is instructive here. The shifts in allegiance of Count Heribert of the Vermandois, replete with negotiations and agreements in a single year, as recorded in Flodoard, *Annals* s.a. 928 (*Les Annales de Flodoard*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1905), pp. 40–3; trans. B. Bachrach and S. Fanning, *The ‘Annals’ of Flodoard of Reims, 919–966* (Peterborough, Ontario, 2004), pp. 17–18), are indicative of how many details the authors of the ASC had the potential to have deliberately left out.
 45. Townend, *Language and History in Viking Age England*, pp. 110–28 (see above, p. 123). Townend’s broader thesis is of mutual intelligibility between English and Norse speakers but it must be noted that the circumstances of the negotiation of a peace treaty presumably called for more than just mutual intelligibility.

46. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 49; that the royal title for Æthelred may just be an error is indicated by the fact that he is referred to as *dux* in reference to events in 886 (Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 46), though Æthelweard's use of *subsidiū* rather than *auxiliū* for the help given may indicate that he thought more of Æthelred than the ætheling. For Edward's inexperience at this point, see B. Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', in *Edward the Elder 899–924*, ed. N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London, 2001), pp. 25–39, at p. 32.
47. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, pp. 49–50. See Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, p. 328.
48. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 44.
49. Lavelle, 'Hostages', p. 287.
50. Andersson, 'Viking Policy of Ethelred', pp. 7–10. For the suggestion that Andersson overplays the 'civilising' influences of Christianity in this period, cf. P. R. Brown, 'The Viking Policy of Ethelred: A Response', and P. Sawyer, 'Ethelred II, Olaf Tryggvason, and the Conversion of Norway', in the same volume, *Anglo-Scandinavian England*, ed. Niles and Amodio, pp. 13–15 and 17–24.
51. E.g. Lund, 'Ólaf Tryggvason' and Lavelle, 'Hostages', p. 288; cf. B. Sawyer and P. Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia from Conversion to Reformation, circa 800–1500* (Minneapolis, 1993), p. 103.
52. Citing the case of King Anarawd of Gwynedd's confirmational sponsorship by King Alfred, J. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship: Ritual Sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ithaca, 1998), pp. 221–22.
53. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 101–21. The importance of the bishop in confirmation is stressed in M. F. Giandera, *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 103–104.
54. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, p. 112, citing Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 32. It is also worth noting here, as Barbara Yorke has pointed out to me, that this downplayed Alfred's apparent papal coronation in a manner which helps us to see Æthelweard's emphasis on his own branch of the royal family.
55. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 43.
56. The two surviving pontificals from the period, with details of confirmation rites, are published in H. M. J. Banting (ed.), *Two Anglo-Saxon Pontificals (the Egbert and Sidney Sussex Pontificals)*, Henry Bradshaw Society Main Series 104 (Woodbridge, 1989), with details of adult confirmation in the 'Egbert' pontifical at pp. 14–15. Neither is identifiable with a West Saxon bishop, though the provenance of 'Egbert' is no longer as securely identified with York as it once was (for a suggestion that it may have been associated with Worcester in the tenth century, see Banting's introduction, pp. xxxii–xxxvii). N.B. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, p. 111, notes the lack of reference to the role of sponsors in these pontificals, though this is commensurate with sources referring to confirmation from across western Europe (J. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* [Princeton, NJ, 1986], pp. 213–14). Given what evidence of sponsorship does exist, this need not be an issue if this was not a concern for the rites performed by a confirming bishop.
57. ASC 878. Asser, ch. 56, p. 47; trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 85. See Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, p. 132.
58. Theodoricus Monachus, *Historia de antiquitate regum norwagiensium*, ch. 7, in *Monumenta Historica Norvegiae*, ed. G. Storm (Kristiania, 1880), p. 14; trans. D. McDougall and I. McDougall, *Theodoricus Monachus, Historia de antiquitate regum norwagiensium: an Account of the Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings*, Viking Society for Northern Research (London, 1998), p. 10. I must acknowledge Ann Williams, 'Thorkell the Tall and the Bubble Reputation: the Vicissitudes of Fame', below, p. 152, for a timely reminder not to go too far with this seductive detail from the pen of a twelfth-century author.
59. ASC CDE 992 and 1003.
60. In charters with witness lists known to date from 993–4 (Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 876, 880, 881, 882) he is consistently the first to witness among the *duces* from at least 993 onward (the previous surviving charters, in which he appears third, after Æthelwine of the East Angles (d.992) and Byrhtnoth of the East Saxons (d.991) is from 990 [Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 942, 944 and 874]. See S. D. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c.670–1066* (Univ. of Cambridge, working edition, 1995), table 62(1).
61. *Older Law of the Gulathing*, ch. 26, and *Older Law of the Frostathing*, III. 8, trans. L. M. Larson, *The Earliest Norwegian Laws, Being the Gulathing Law and the Frostathing Law* (New York, 1935), pp. 55 and 248–49. For discussion of these, see Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 133–34.
62. However, note that the kin networks do not seem to have been expected to have extended to the obligations of Olaf *et al.*'s children to one another or against their respective enemies: W. I. Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking: Feud, Law, and Society in Saga Iceland* (Chicago, 1990), p. 174

- notes that Icelandic sagas, which reflect a Christian society, 'take little interest in [such a] relationship', suggesting that obligations of vengeance did not extend far into the extended spiritual kin. For the limits of networks of spiritual kinship in Frankish society, see Lynch, *Godparents*, pp. 203–204.
63. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, p. 80.
 64. Ari Þorgilsson, *Íslendingabók*, ch. 7, trans. S. Grønlie, *Íslendingabók – Kristni Saga: The Book of the Icelanders – The Story of the Conversion*, Viking Society for Northern Research (London, 2006), pp. 7–10. See J. L. Byock, *Medieval Iceland: Society, Sagas, and Power* (Berkeley CA, 1988), pp. 140–43.
 65. Theodoricus Monachus, *Historia de antiquitate regum norwagiensium*, ch. 7, ed. Storm, p. 14 (trans. McDougall and McDougall, p. 10).
 66. P. Sawyer, 'The Process of Scandinavian Christianization in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', in *The Christianization of Scandinavia*, ed. B. Sawyer, P. Sawyer and I. Wood (Alingsås, 1987), pp. 68–87, at p. 73.
 67. Writing in the late eleventh century, Adam of Bremen records conversion of the Norwegian king by a certain John from England, implying the conversion of Olaf, though it should be noted that Adam does not name Olaf at this point and that Olaf was not king until he returned from England c.994: *Magistri Adam Bremensis Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. B. Schmeidler, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 2 (Hannover, 1917), IV.34, pp. 268–69; trans. F. J. Tschan, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* (New York, 1959), p. 214.
 68. Although he does not go as far as to suggest that Swein oversaw Olaf's baptism, Peter Sawyer notes Swein's overlordship of Norway in 'Swein (d.1014)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26830>> (accessed 23 May 2013). Sawyer explores misconceptions regarding Swein's 'pagan' reputation in 'Swein Forkbeard and the Historians', in *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to John Taylor*, ed. I. Wood and G. A. Loud (London, 1991), pp. 27–40.
 69. Olaf's sea battle with Swein is related by Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae*, II.40, pp. 100–101; trans. Tschan, p. 82, albeit in a manner which makes Swein the agent of righteous resistance by constructing a narrative of Olaf's revenge for Swein's return to the true faith of Christianity. See F. Birkeli, 'The Earliest Missionary Activities from England to Norway', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 15 (1971), pp. 27–37. L. Abrams, 'The Anglo-Saxons and the Christianization of Scandinavia', *ASE* 24 (1995), pp. 213–49, at pp. 220–23, puts forward a tentative case for English accompaniment to Norway after 994; Andersson, 'Viking Policy of Ethelred', pp. 256–57, puts the case more strongly.
 70. See Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 882, which confirms Sigeric's sale of an estate at Risborough, Bucks., to Bishop Æscwig of Dorchester for some £115 (90 pounds of silver and 200 mancuses of gold) to pay a *gens pagana*. This dates to '995' but has an indiction date for the previous year. If Sigeric died in 994, this payment may be more securely linked with the circumstances of a peace agreement made in the previous year. On the likely venerability of Sigeric by this stage, see Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, pp. 279–80.
 71. R. Abels, 'King Alfred's Peace-Making Strategies with the Vikings', *Haskins Society Journal* 3 (1991), pp. 23–34, is the classic study on this topic. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 220–21 discusses the problems of making peace with Hæsten (or Hasteinn), a character uninterested in settlement as part of the political process perhaps because he had already been, Lynch surmises, baptised in Francia.
 72. A. J. Robertson (ed. and trans.), *Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I* (Cambridge, 1925), p. 56.
 73. W. Braekman, 'Wyrdrwriteras: an Unpublished Ælfrician Text in Manuscript Hatton 115', *Revue belge de philologie de d'histoire* 44 (1966), pp. 959–70. For a defence organised at a local level (perhaps below that of the ealdorman) at *Æthelingadene* (Singleton, Sussex), see ASC A 1001.
 74. See Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, p. 329, for observations on the use of the Old Norse term *mal*, 'agreement', in the preface and first section of the *II Æthelred* code.
 75. N. Lund, 'Peace and Non-Peace in the Viking Age: Ottar in Biarmaland, the Rus in Byzantium, and Danes and Norwegians in England', in *Proceedings of the Tenth Viking Conference: Larkollen, Norway, 1985*, ed. J. E. Knirk (Oslo, 1987), pp. 255–69, at pp. 264–68, and for the context of the Isle of Wight, pp. 258–59; see also R. Abels, 'Household Men, Mercenaries and Vikings in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Mercenaries and Paid Men: The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of a Conference held at University of Wales, Swansea, 7th–9th July 2005*, ed. J. France (Leiden, 2008), pp. 143–66, at pp. 155–56. For the strategic dimensions of West

- Saxon defence, see discussion in S. Roffey and R. Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes: Negotiating Early Medieval Identities', above, p. 24.
76. P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc et les Vikings* (Paris, 2009); see discussion of this issue in Roffey and Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes', pp. 9–11.
 77. Discussed in Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, p. 248; such events as those recorded around this time by the Norman historian, Dudo of St Quentin (*De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae Ducum*, ed. J. Lair (Caen, 1865), I.6–7; trans. E. Christiansen, *Dudo of St Quentin: History of the Normans* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 19–20), may have been legendary, though their lessons were not necessarily unheeded. It may be especially significant that the 'Hasting' recorded by Dudo as the attacker of Luna, Italy, by means of baptism and faked death, may be equated with the reputation of the historical Hasteinn, whom Alfred attempted to make peace with in 893 (*ASC* 893; cf. Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, pp. 48–50, where no mention is made of conversion of the Viking's sons). Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 218–19.
 78. On the subject of treaties of rulers and space on equal terms, see G. Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers: Political and Social Bonds in Early Medieval Europe*, trans. C. Carroll (Cambridge, 2004), p. 80 and, with specific reference to peacemaking, P. Dalton, 'Sites and Occasions of Peacemaking in England and Normandy, c.900–c.1150', *Haskins Society Journal* 16 (2005), pp. 12–26. A study proposing a theory for the movement of subjects toward a stationary ruler is M. Gravel, *Distances, rencontres, communications: Réaliser l'empire sous Charlemagne et Louis le Pieux* (Turnhout, 2012), especially pp. 27–94.
 79. Note also the tradition of Ælfheah's death as a result of negotiations of the ransom of innocents in 1012, an action which may be connected with Sigeric's role in negotiations prior to the treaty of Andover and Ælfheah's own experience in the confirmation of Danes at Andover. Osbern's *vita* and, developing Osbern's theme of baptism, JW s.a. 1012, pp. 470–71, has his death – a possible mercy killing – as the work of a Dane who had been confirmed at Ælfheah's hands: see Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 202–203, citing H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra* (London, 2 vols, 1691), Vol. 2, p. 141; cf. Williams, 'Bubble Reputation', p. 147, below.
 80. Giandera, *Episcopal Culture*, pp. 103–104 for the role of bishops.
 81. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 102–107.
 82. Bauduin, *Monde franc et les Vikings*, pp. 123–49, especially pp. 142–45; Ermoldus Nigellus, *In honorem Hludovici imperatoris*, lines 2062–513, in Ermold le Noir, *Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épitres au roi Pépin*, ed. E. Faral (Paris, 1964), pp. 156–90; trans. T. F. X. Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious: Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and the Astronomer* (University Park, PA, 2009), pp. 174–83. Note that in Ermold's account there was no specific confirmation ceremony beyond a secular submission of lordship (lines 2448–503, pp. 186–90, trans. pp. 182–83, though this had taken place in 814, Faral notes [p. 188, n. 1], citing the Astronomer's *Life* of Louis, ch. 24 [trans. Noble, p. 249]); according to Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, pp. 211–12, separate confirmation existed in a similar manner in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon practices from the eighth century onward, though Bauduin, pp. 135–37, notes the Byzantine-influenced particularism of the 826 event.
 83. My memory attributes the observation on the Somerset occasion to Patrick Wormald, made in an address at the *Assembly Places and Practices in Medieval Europe* conference, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, 18 March 2000.
 84. For Ingelheim in the context of the political landscape in the late eighth and ninth centuries, see M. Innes, 'People, Places and Power in Carolingian Society', in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. M. de Jong and F. Theuvs, with C. van Rhijn (Leiden, 2001), pp. 419–26. See also Roffey and Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes', pp. 9–10.
 85. J. Blair, 'Palaces or Minsters? Northampton and Cheddar Reconsidered', *ASE* 24 (1996), pp. 97–121, and *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 326–27, discussing P. Rahtz, *The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar*, BAR British Ser. 65 (Oxford, 1979).
 86. *Vita Dunstani Auctore B*, ch. 14, in *Memorials of Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 63 (London, 1874), pp. 23–24; Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1507, trans. Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 174–8.
 87. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1515, trans. *EHD* 1, p. 555–56.
 88. P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century, Volume 1: Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 437–38. See also R. Lavelle, *Royal Estates in Anglo-Saxon Wessex: Land, Politics and Family Strategies*, BAR British Ser. 439 (Oxford, 2007), pp. 73–76.
 89. R. Lavelle, 'Why Grateley? Reflections on Anglo-Saxon Kingship in a Hampshire Landscape',

- Hampshire Studies: Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* 60 (2005), pp. 154–69.
90. For the significance of a stationary emperor in political communication in the Carolingian world, see Gravel, *Distances, rencontres, communications*, especially pp. 51–71. In the ASC CDE 993/94 account, use of the verb *ledan* presumably had overtones of authority, perhaps recalling the record of leading captured Vikings to the king at Winchester in ASC 896 and/or the obligation of the ealdorman to lead armies. I am grateful to Courtney Konshuh for the latter observation.
 91. M. K. Lawson 'Archbishop Wulfstan and the Homiletic Element in the Laws of Æthelred II and Cnut', *EHR* 107 (1992), pp. 565–86, at p. 576, discusses the implications of the link between Enham the place with the *Agnus Dei* coinage of King Æthelred. For the apocalyptic legal context, see Wormald, *Making of English Law*, pp. 449–65. On the broader point of the 'memory' of events at a place, see, amongst others, G. Koziol, *The Politics of Memory and Identity in Carolingian Royal Diplomas: the West Frankish Kingdom (840–987)* (Turnhout, 2012), p. 537, and T. J. T. Williams, 'The Place of Slaughter: Exploring the West Saxon Battlescape', above, pp. 35–55.
 92. The problems of contextualising the burials to the St Brice's Day Massacre are noted by Angela Boyle, 'Death on the Dorset Ridgeway: the Discovery and Excavation of an Early Medieval Mass Burial', above, pp. 114–20, though Boyle reviews a range of other possible contexts. The full details of the burials are in L. Loe, A. Boyle, H. Webb and D. Score, '*Given to the Ground: A Viking Age Mass Grave on Ridgeway Hill, Weymouth*' (Dorchester, 2014), with a further review of possible historical contexts by Lesley Abrams at pp. 10–15. For a maximum interpretation in the immediate aftermath of the archaeological discoveries, see D. Keys, 'A Viking Mystery', *Smithsonian Magazine* (Oct. 2010), at <<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/A-Viking-Mystery.html>> (accessed 16 Aug. 2013).
 93. See Appendix.
 94. The evidently controlled nature of the means of death suggests that they were not in the heat of combat. Cf. the trauma interpreted in two individual burials at Repton (Derbys.): M. Biddle and B. Kjolbye-Biddle, 'Repton and the "Great Heathen Army"', in *Vikings and the Danelaw: Select Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress, Nottingham and York, 21–30 August 1997*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell, R. Hall, J. Jesch and D. N. Parsons (Oxford, 2001), pp. 45–96, at pp. 60–65.
 95. Although, unlike tattooing, there is no specific Biblical prohibition against tooth decoration, teeth are often noted in a hostile context in both the Old and New Testaments, e.g. Proverbs 30:14, which could indicate why (beside the inherent pain) Christian English may not have wished to undertake decorative dental modifications.
 96. See generally G. Althoff, '*Ira Regis*: Prolegomena to a History of Royal Anger', in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. B. H. Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY, 1998), pp. 59–74.
 97. ASC 896.
 98. Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 25 (Hannover, 1911), ch. 17, p. 21; trans. P. E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier: The Complete Einhard* (Peterborough, Ont., 1998), p. 27. The parallel of the depiction of Charlemagne with events of the early years of Edward the Elder's reign is drawn by Gore, 'Review of Viking Attacks in Western England', pp. 64–65.
 99. See Boyle, 'Death on the Dorset Ridgeway', p. 113.
 100. 'ǵ ælc ceapscip frið hæbbe, ðe binnan muðan cuman, ðeh hit unfriðscyp sy, gyf hit undrifen bið.' Liebermann (ed.), *Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, Vol. 1, p. 222; trans. *EHD* 1, p. 438.
 101. *EHD* 1, p. 438, n. 2; Liebermann (ed.), *Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, Vol. 3, p. 153; Robertson (ed.), *Laws of the Kings of England*, p. 57.
 102. *The Old English Orosius*, ed. J. Bately, EETS Supplementary Ser. 6 (London, 1980), p. 42.
 103. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 296–7.
 104. Lund, 'Peace and Non-Peace', p. 266; Lund discusses the *Old English Orosius*, pp. 14–15 at pp. 255 and 259–60, citing C. Fell, 'Unfrið: an Approach to a Definition', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research* 21 (1982–3), pp. 85–100, at pp. 94–95.
 105. Wormald, *Making of English Law*, pp. 320–30.
 106. GDB fols 75v. (*DB*: Dorset 1:22), 83r. (54:3), 83v. (55:5–6), 84r. (56:9). The location of the burials is O.S. SY 672 859.
 107. GDB fol. 75r. (*DB*: Dorset 1:1; 1:4). See F. R. Thorn, 'Hundreds and Wapentakes', and accompanying map, in *The Dorset Domesday*, ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin (London, 1991), pp. 27–40.
 108. Lavelle, *Royal Estates*, p. 33, discussing possible ninth-century integration of Sutton Poyntz into the estate organisation, evinced in Sawyer, *Charters*,

- no. 347 (AD 891); for the significance of the night's farm, pp. 46–47.
109. F. P. Magoun, 'King Alfred's Naval and Beach Battle with the Danes in 896' *Modern Language Review* 37 (1942), pp. 409–14, at p. 411, n. 3; reprinted in Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 290–96, at p. 294, n. 140, with additional discussion by Lavelle at pp. 287–89.
 110. See above, p. 133.
 111. Although not specifically dealing with the limits of river and estuary, K. M. Wickham-Crowley, 'Living on the *Ecg*: The Mutable Boundaries of Land and Water in Anglo-Saxon Contexts', in *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes*, ed. C. A. Lees and G. R. Overing (University Park, PA, 2006), pp. 85–110, raises issues about the intersection of land and water which may be relevant to the notion of estuarine territoriality.
 112. Barker, 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle used by Æthelweard'.
 113. On this, see J. Wolschke-Bulmahn, 'The Landscape Design of the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp Memorial', in *Places of Commemoration: Search for Identity and Landscape Design*, ed. J. Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, DC, 2001), pp. 269–300, at p. 284.
 114. Discussion of the estimated number of individuals buried at Ridgeway Hill is in Loe *et al.*, 'Given to the Ground', pp. 129–30. Note that this differs slightly from the numbers suggested by Boyle, 'Death on the Dorset Ridgeway', above, p. 110.
 115. For discussion of ships in this period, see O. Crumlin-Pedersen, 'Description and Analysis of the Ships as Found', in *The Skuldelev Ships I: Topography, Archaeology, History, Conservation and Display*, ed. O. Crumlin-Pedersen and O. Olesen, with B. L. Clausen, *Ships and Boats of the North* 4.1 (Roskilde, 2002), pp. 96–304, with discussion of Skuldelev 2 at pp. 141–94. The potential crew size is discussed at pp. 173–74.
 116. Crumlin-Pedersen, 'Description and Analysis', p. 174.
 117. For an estimate of some eighty men on a vessel like Skuldelev 2, based on the archaeological and documentary evidence (though one which is not able to take account of Crumlin-Pedersen's later publications), see N. A. M. Rodger, 'Cnut's Geld and the Size of Danish Ships', *EHR* 110 (1995), pp. 392–403. Rodger's suggestion of the likelihood of specialist warriors aboard a ship alongside specialist sailors (pp. 399–400) is logical, though given Crumlin-Pedersen's later considerations of the vessel, this estimate may be on the high side. Cf. discussion in M. K. Lawson, 'Appendix V: The Size of Danish Ships', in his *Cnut: England's Viking King* [revised edition of *Cnut: the Danes in England in the Eleventh Century*] (Stroud, 2004), pp. 223–24.
 118. See Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars*, pp. 148–49.
 119. O. Crumlin-Pedersen, with C. Hirte, K. Jensen and S. Möller-Wiering, *Viking-Age Ships and Shipbuilding in Hedeby/Haithabu and Schleswig*, *Ships and Boats of the North* 2 (Roskilde, 1997), 81–95 (quotation at p. 93).
 120. For an overview of the Roskilde 6 vessel (likely to be well-known in Britain following its appearance in the 2014 British Museum *Vikings: Life and Legend* exhibition), see its entry at *The NAVIS I Project* website <<http://www2.rgzm.de/Navis/Home/Frames.htm>> (accessed 17 Dec. 2013).

CHAPTER NINE

Thorkell the Tall and the Bubble Reputation: The Vicissitudes of Fame¹

Ann Williams

It has often been observed that the English aristocracy of the early eleventh century was not so much 'Anglo-Saxon' as 'Anglo-Scandinavian'. While too much can be made of Scandinavian influence on English politics, administration and social mores, it is certainly true that a significant proportion of the movers and shakers of the time derived their immediate ancestry not from England, not even from the 'Danelaw' (whatever that means), but from Scandinavia. The very fact of the Danish conquest of England and the (temporary) imposition of a Danish royal dynasty meant an influx of men in the following of the new rulers, many of whom were rewarded with lands and offices. Some, though not all, of these newcomers settled down to found new 'Anglo-Scandinavian' families, not just in the north and east, where their remote cousins had lived since the days of the first Viking Age, but also in the south and west, the heartlands of 'English' England in Wessex and western Mercia. This chapter concerns one incomer who did not found such a family, and whose influence on the course of English history, though initially dramatic, even traumatic, was more transient. His role in the fall of the kingdom of Æthelred *unræd* (978–1016) into the hands of Cnut (1016–35) was crucial; in fact it is not going too far to suggest that the Danish conquest of 1016 could not have taken place without him.² Yet in the end, he stands as an example of a failed hero; one who, having no one to tell his story, faded into

the mists of time, leaving only his name behind. What does it take to make a hero? Obviously skill in the handling of weapons is a prerequisite, along with courage and sagacity; charismatic powers of leadership, in order to attract a *hired* of fighting-men, would seem essential, as would the opportunity to display these qualities; and, of course, a hero is helped by a measure of good fortune, though winning the battle is not absolutely necessary – after all, it is 'not that you won or lost, but how you played the game'.³ One final ingredient remains: someone must tell your story. As with being rich, there is no point in being heroic if nobody notices.

Telling the stories of heroes was one of the prime tasks of the skaldic poets whose *floreast* was the tenth and eleventh centuries, though their verses were not committed to writing before the twelfth century at the earliest. There are, of course, difficulties associated with this complex, sometimes intractable poetry, not least of which is the problem of authenticity, which 'at best ... can only rest on strong probability, established by source criticism'.⁴ In this field, as in so many others, we poor historians are at the mercy of specialists in other disciplines. Early medievalists, however, have to take what they have got and be thankful for it. It is in the last years of Æthelred *unræd* and the reign of his eventual successor, Cnut, that skaldic verse becomes a significant source for English history. As one of the most successful conqueror-kings of

the north, Cnut attracted a large circle of court poets, as did his rival Olaf Haraldsson of Norway (also known as Olaf *helgi* or St Olaf).⁵ Cnut also figures largely in Thorðr Kolbeinsson's *Eiríksdrápa*, composed for Cnut's brother-in-law, Eiríkr of Hlaðir, and in the anonymous *Liðsmannaflokkur*, in which he shares the billing with the subject of this chapter, Thorkell the Tall. Most skaldic effusions centre on a single protagonist, and *Eiríksdrápa* and *Liðsmannaflokkur* are unusual in having 'a dual focus of praise'; indeed it is in part because of this 'dual focus' that both poems have been dated to the early years of Cnut's reign, c.1016–17 in the case of *Liðsmannaflokkur*, and c.1016–22 in that of *Eiríksdrápa*.⁶

If this date for *Liðsmannaflokkur* is correct, it is one of the earliest references to Thorkell the Tall, roughly contemporaneous with his appearances in the *Chronicon* of Thietmar of Merseberg, who died in 1018, and in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, whose exemplar (for the section in which Thorkell's English campaigns are described) was written between 1016 and 1023.⁷ From the same period, or a little later, we have the reference to Thorkell on one of the rune-stones raised at Yttergärde, Sweden, in honour of Ulf of Borresta.⁸ Thorkell attests the surviving diplomas of Cnut up to 1023, and perhaps also one of Æthelred's later diplomas, as well as a private charter for Ramsey Abbey; he is commemorated in the Thorney Abbey *Liber Vitae*, and a possibly mid eleventh-century note in the Bury Psalter associates him with the abbey's refoundation.⁹

These are the only strictly contemporaneous notices of Thorkell the Tall, though it should be mentioned that the twelfth-century compiler John of Worcester (or Florence, if you prefer) had access to a lost Latin chronicle also used by Byrthferth of Ramsey, which certainly extended to 992 and perhaps (though this is disputed) to 1017.¹⁰ Thorkell also plays a part (which will be discussed later) in the *Encomium* of Queen Emma, composed in the years 1041–2.¹¹ After this, we are dependent upon much later texts. In this chapter, I want first

to look at how far it is possible to reconstruct Thorkell's career from the contemporary sources, and then to discuss the treatment of Thorkell by some of the later writers.

Thorkell in Contemporary Sources

The bulk of what we know about Thorkell comes from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. We meet him first in the entry for 1009, when 'the immense raiding-army, which we called Thorkell's army', landed in Kent, at Sandwich, 'immediately after Lammas' (1 August).¹² The first thing to notice is the composition of this force. The English might call it 'Thorkell's army', but he was not the only leader; John of Worcester adds that 'Thorkell's army was followed by 'an immense fleet of the Danes' commanded by Hemming and Eilaf, which landed in Thanet and joined Thorkell at Sandwich'.¹³ Nor was the immense raiding-army recruited from Denmark alone, for when describing its departure in 1012, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that it 'dispersed as widely as it had been collected'. The participation of a Norwegian contingent is attested by the praise-poems composed for the future King Olaf *helgi*, the *Höfudlausn* of Óttarr *svarti* and the *Vikingavísur* of Óttarr's uncle, Sigvatr Thórðarson, both of whom (of course) give their hero the starring role and ignore Thorkell.¹⁴ The presence of at least some Swedes is proven by Ulf of Borresta's rune-stone at Yttergärde (Uppland), which boasts that he 'took three gelds in England; first Tostig paid, then Thorkell paid, then Cnut paid'.¹⁵ Tostig cannot be identified with any certainty, but he may have been among the leaders of the 'great fleet' (*micla flota*) which ravaged southern England in 1006.¹⁶ This fleet was paid off in 1007 but some of its members may have remained in England and joined with Thorkell's army in 1009; the opening moves in his campaign, an attack on Canterbury followed by the establishment of a ship-base on the Isle of Wight, mirror the tactics of the 'great fleet' in 1006.¹⁷ Nor need they have been the only inhabitants of Æthelred's kingdom to take service

with the king's enemies. The Ulfrík, whose rune-stone (raised by his grandsons at Lingsberg in Sweden) boasts that he took two gelds in England, bears a name very rare in Scandinavian sources but, in its Old English form, Wulfriç, very common on this side of the North Sea; Ulfrík may thus have been not an invader but 'a man of mixed descent, born in the Danelaw', who joined Thorkell in the course of his expedition.¹⁸

After Martinmas (11 November), Thorkell's army moved from the Isle of Wight to Kent, where they established a base from which they attacked London and Oxford before settling down in the spring of 1010 to repair their ships.¹⁹ It is unfortunate that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not record the precise location of the ship-base, saying only that the army 'took up winter quarters on the Thames, and lived off Essex and off the shires which were nearest, on both sides of the Thames'.²⁰ A Kentish location on Sheppey or Thanet is possible, for the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that the men of East Kent had bought off the Vikings with a payment of £3,000, but neither can realistically be described as 'on the Thames'. The movements of the army in the winter of 1009 suggest a base farther upriver: they chose a route through the Chilterns to attack Oxford, and returned 'on both sides of the Thames' until they reached Staines (Middx.), where those on the north bank crossed the river to avoid the army which had been assembled against them at London. Although no agreement with the men of West Kent is recorded, a location somewhere in the vicinity of Rochester (Kent), which seems to have had facilities for shipbuilding and repair, is a distinct possibility.²¹

The position of Thorkell's winter quarters, to which his force returned again and again in the next two years, has a bearing on the total absence in the sources of the English fleet. It is clear that, by the turn of the tenth and eleventh centuries, Sandwich (Kent) was becoming the normal 'battle-station' for the English fleet, presumably because its position at the southern mouth of the Wantsum provided 'an ideal haven well-protected from the English

Channel by shingle banks'.²² Equally evident is London's status as the fleet's home-base; it was there that ships were assembled in 992, and in 1009 those ships which remained after a disastrous muster at Sandwich were taken 'back to London'.²³ In forcing a landing at Sandwich in 1009, Thorkell was hindering the English fleet's deployment; in establishing his army on the lower Thames, he was, in effect, shutting the same fleet up in its home-base while permitting the free movement of his own ships. He was, in fact, employing the blocking tactics which previous generations of western rulers had used against his own forebears.

These tactics display Thorkell's grasp of English affairs, demonstrated again in his assault on East Anglia in 1010. Soon after Easter (9 April), the fleet sailed for Ipswich, and immediately made for the place 'where they had heard that Ulfcytel was with his army'. The subsequent battle on Ringmere Heath, four miles north of Thetford (Norfolk), was something of a grudge match, for it was there in 1004 that Ulfcytel and his men had given the Danes 'the hardest fighting they had met with in England'.²⁴ There is something pointed in Thorkell's choice of target, and the second battle of Ringmere, on 5 May 1010, was a resounding victory for the Danes, in which many Englishmen of note, including Æthelstan, the king's brother-in-law, were killed.²⁵ A further indication of foreknowledge may be the burning of Canning's Marsh (Wilts.) as the host returned to their base on the Thames, for the episcopal manor of Bishop's Canning was probably the centre of a ship-soke associated with the bishop of Ramsbury.²⁶

The campaigns of 1009 and 1010 were disastrous enough, but what really shook the English kingdom to its political foundations was the attack on Canterbury in 1011, and the subsequent murder of the archbishop, Ælfheah, on 19 April 1012. The events are described in detail in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. The English had already sued for peace when, after a three-week siege lasting from 9–29 September, Canterbury fell through the treachery of one Ælfmær; among the captives were

Archbishop Ælfheah, Ælfweard the king's reeve, Leofrun, who was probably abbess of Minster-in-Thanet, and Godwine, bishop of Rochester, plus all the ecclesiastics and an uncountable number of laymen and laywomen. The host 'stayed afterwards in that *burh* as long as they pleased, and when they had then thoroughly searched [*asmeade*] the whole *burh*, they went to their ships and took the archbishop with them'.²⁷

By the spring of 1012, the tribute had been agreed, and all the English *witan* assembled at London for the payment, while Thorkell's army probably set up its camp at Southwark. Despite the huge tribute of £48,000, it seems that a personal ransom was demanded from the archbishop, and when he refused to pay it, or allow it to be raised on his behalf, the troops became

inflamed against him ... they seized the bishop and brought him to their husting on the eve of the Sunday of the octave of Easter, which was 19 April, and shamefully put him to death there: they pelted him with bones and with ox-heads, and one of them struck him on the head with the back of an axe, [so] that he sank down with the blow, and his holy blood fell on the ground, and so he sent his holy soul to God's kingdom.²⁸

On the following day his body was carried to London and interred at St Paul's, where it lay until it was fetched to Canterbury and re-buried at Christ Church in 1023.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says nothing about the role of Thorkell in the capture and murder of Ælfheah, but there is another almost contemporaneous description of the event in the seventh book of Thietmar of Merseberg's *Chronicon*, written between 1014 and 1018.²⁹ Thietmar admits that his knowledge of English affairs is slight (understandably enough, since he was a native of east Saxony) and undertakes to relate only what he has learnt from 'a reliable witness', whose name, Sewald, might imply that he was an Englishman.³⁰ The reliability of Sewald's account is somewhat diminished by the fact that Thietmar calls the victim 'Dunstan', but he does correctly

name Thorkell as the leader of the Viking force.³¹ In Thietmar's version, the archbishop initially promised a ransom to the Danish army, but 'when the designated time was past' and the money was demanded, he refused payment on the grounds of poverty.³² This provoked the rage of the assembled host, whose members 'took up various weapons with the intention of killing him'. Thorkell himself attempted to prevent the murder, promising his companions gold and silver and whatever he had or could acquire, with the sole exception of his ship, but 'their anger could only be satisfied by the innocent blood, which they caused to flow freely by hitting Dunstan [*sic.*] with the skulls of cattle [*capitibus boum*], showering him with stones, and striking him with sticks'.

Thietmar's account of Ælfheah's martyrdom is not, of course, identical with that in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* – it would be very suspicious if it were – but it is compatible with it, and the appearance of cattle skulls as missiles in both versions might suggest a common source.³³ Nor does Thietmar's account of Thorkell's behaviour jar with what we know of his movements after the murder. The *Chronicle* records that, once the tribute was paid, the host 'dispersed as widely as it had been collected', except that forty-five ships entered the service of King Æthelred 'and they promised him to defend this country, and he was to feed and clothe them'. Though Thorkell is not specifically named as their leader, subsequent events show that this fleet, stationed at Greenwich, was his own *lið*.³⁴ He may indeed be the *Purcýtel* who in 1012 attests a diploma of King Æthelred in favour of Godwine of Rochester, one of the ecclesiastics captured at Canterbury in 1011; if so, it is slightly ironic that the preceding attestation is that of Thorkell's adversary of 1010, Ulfcytel of the East Angles.³⁵ It was not, of course, unprecedented for English kings to hire forces which had previously been harrying their lands, but Thorkell's entrance into Æthelred's service is not the only suggestion of a change of heart engendered by Ælfheah's death.³⁶ Someone carried the archbishop's corpse to London

on the day after the murder, where it was received by Bishop Eadnoth of Dorchester and Bishop Ælfhun of London, and since no English agency is mentioned in respect of its transportation, it must have been undertaken by someone from the Viking host, perhaps Thorkell himself.³⁷

The departure of the 'immense raiding army' after Easter 1012 brought about only a temporary respite in the troubles of the English. In the summer of 1013 ('before August'), 'King Swein ['Forkbeard' of Denmark] came with his fleet to Sandwich'; he did not stop there, however, but sailed up the east coast to the Humber and so along the Trent to Gainsborough (Lincs.), which became his English base. Having received the submission of the Northumbrians and the Five Boroughs, Swein proceeded southwards, taking hostages from Oxford and then Winchester (Hants), both of which submitted to him; but when he came to London, 'the borough and its citizens would not yield, because King Æthelred was inside and Thorkell with him'.³⁸ Swein moved off westwards, to receive the submission of all the western thegns at Bath (Som.); 'he then turned northward to his ships, and all the nation regarded him as full king'. It was only after this that the Londoners submitted and gave hostages. Swein then demanded payment and provisions for his army, and Thorkell's fleet had also to be paid and provisioned; they were now King Æthelred's only bulwark against Swein, and he remained with 'the fleet which lay in the Thames' until Christmas 1013, which he spent on the Isle of Wight, before fleeing across the Channel to Normandy. He did not stay there long. Swein died on 3 February 1014, and soon afterwards the English *witan* negotiated Æthelred's return; soon after Easter (25 April), the king was able to drive Cnut out of Gainsborough and back to Denmark.

After 1013, the *Chronicle* has no more to say about Thorkell until 1017, when Cnut made him earl of East Anglia, but precisely when Thorkell went over to Cnut is unclear. Since the summer of 1014 saw the payment of £21,000 to 'the army that lay at Greenwich', Thorkell was presumably still in

Æthelred's employ at that point.³⁹ In September 1015, however, Cnut returned to the attack, concentrating his efforts in the first instance on the western shires of Wessex and southern Mercia. Edmund ætheling, Æthelred's eldest surviving son, rallied the north, but Eadric *streona*, ealdorman of Mercia, went over to Cnut with forty ships.⁴⁰ This could have been the Mercian ship-*here*, which was probably based at Gloucester, but since John of Worcester adds that the ships were manned by Danish soldiers, this might mark the moment of Thorkell's defection as well.⁴¹ It is also possible that Æthelred's death on 23 April 1016 brought his service to a natural end.⁴² It remains true, however, that no contemporary source has anything to say about Thorkell's role in Cnut's conquest of England, which allowed Alistair Campbell to conclude that he remained loyal to the English cause until the final recognition of Cnut as king in 1017.⁴³ Eric John, on the contrary, believed that Thorkell, along with Cnut's brother-in-law Eiríkr of Hladir, 'master-minded Cnut's campaign for the kingdom'.⁴⁴

Thorkell, the Skalds, and the 'Anglo-Scandinavian' Realm

The testimony of *Liðsmannaflokkr* tends to support John's case. The function of skaldic verse is not to provide detailed narration but to praise its protagonists in skillfully-wrought poetic metre, which does not make it a good source for factual information. *Liðsmannaflokkr*, however, is clearly intended to glorify both Thorkell and Cnut as conquerors of the English. It appears to run together Thorkell's exploits in 1009–10 and the campaigns of Cnut in 1015–16, concentrating on 'a few scenes – a landing, a battle on the heath, a hard-won battle against Ulfcelt, the siege of London, and finally the occupation of the city'.⁴⁵ More important is the tension in the poem between praise of Thorkell and praise of Cnut. The latter 'has a slight advantage in the stanza allocation' (eleven to Thorkell's nine), but the relationship between

the two protagonists suggests that Thorkell was more Cnut's ally than his subject.⁴⁶

Though corroborative evidence is late (and considered suspect by Alistair Campbell),⁴⁷ the favour shown to Thorkell by Cnut suggests that he had debts to pay. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says that when Cnut succeeded to the kingdom in 1017, he 'divided it into four, Wessex for himself, East Anglia for Thorkel, Mercia for Eadric, and Northumbria for Eric'.⁴⁸ Thorkell especially received high honours; by 1018 he was the senior ealdorman in the kingdom, attesting first among the *duces* in all Cnut's early diplomas.⁴⁹ It seems likely that he was made regent of England when Cnut returned to Denmark in 1019, for the king's first letter to the English people is addressed to 'his archbishops, his diocesan bishops, and Earl Thorkel and all his earls'; moreover, it is Thorkell who is specifically charged to enforce the king's orders expressed in the letter.⁵⁰ When, in 1020, the commemorative church was dedicated at *Assandun* in Essex, the site of Cnut's decisive victory over Edmund Ironside, Earl Thorkell is likewise the only layman whose presence is noted in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.⁵¹

In 1021, however, Thorkell was banished from England, for unknown reasons. He evidently went to Denmark, perhaps stirring up enough trouble there for Cnut to launch an expedition in 1022. In 1023, there was a reconciliation, in which Thorkell was made regent of Denmark, and guardian of Cnut's son, while Cnut took Thorkell's son with him to England.⁵² This is Thorkell's last appearance in contemporary sources, and he probably died soon afterwards, though the date, place and manner of his death are unknown.⁵³

Even in his lifetime, no skald seems to have felt moved to compose eulogies for Thorkell, and within a few years of his (presumed) death it appears that his deeds were appropriated by others; in the praise-poems composed at Cnut's court in the late 1020s and 1030s, neither Thorkell nor Eiríkr appear and all the credit is given to the king himself.⁵⁴ Thorkell does figure in the *Encomium* of Queen Emma, which dates from 1041–2, but his

role is significantly altered, to an extent that raises suspicion of 'spin-doctoring'.⁵⁵ This is a pity, for the *Encomium* is the only source for Thorkell's participation in Cnut's English campaigns in which he is given some prominence; it is he who commands the Danish army at the battle of Sherston and wins the victory, thereby proving his loyalty to Cnut.⁵⁶ (The effect is somewhat spoilt by the fact that the event is misplaced, immediately after the landing at Sandwich in 1015, whereas in fact it was fought in the summer of 1016.)⁵⁷ Thereafter, the *Encomiast* loses interest in Thorkell, and he re-appears only to interpret the behaviour of the 'raven banner' at *Assandun* as foretelling victory for the Danes in 1016.⁵⁸

The treatment of Thorkell in the *Encomium* deserves closer examination. He first appears as the 'military commander' (*princeps militiae*) of King Swein of Denmark, and requires Swein's permission to go and avenge an unnamed brother, who had been killed in England; his defection to the service of Æthelred in 1012 is the proximate cause of Swein's own invasion in 1013.⁵⁹ No details are given of Swein's expedition save his acceptance as king and subsequent death, followed by the withdrawal of his son Cnut to Denmark. Thorkell, however, decided to 'make peace with the natives', the implication being that he had joined Swein in 1013, which directly contradicts the account in the contemporary *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in which he supports Æthelred throughout.⁶⁰ Nor is this the end of the *Encomiast's* distortions, for he claims that Thorkell remained in England in 1014 so that he would be ready to assist Cnut when he returned to the attack; he rather spoils this effect a paragraph later, when he makes Cnut tell his brother, King Harald, that Thorkell has deserted them, as he did their father King Swein, adding 'I believe he will be against us, but nevertheless he will not prevail'.⁶¹ The *Encomiast* then has Thorkell himself journey to Denmark to repair relations with Cnut; 'having become with great difficulty reconciled to him, he gave an oath of fidelity, to the effect that he would serve him continuously and faithfully'.⁶²

The inconsistencies in the *Encomiast's* narrative of Cnut's campaigns have to be understood with reference to his purpose; he was writing in the reign of Harthacnut, at the request of the king's mother, Queen Emma, in order to vindicate Harthacnut's claim to the English throne and to distance him and his mother from the murder of one of the other claimants, Alfred ætheling, in 1036.⁶³ The *Encomium* was addressed to the movers and shakers of the early 1040s, and the presence in the potential audience of some who remembered Thorkell the Tall may explain the *Encomiast's* portrait of a great war-leader and warrior, but one clearly subordinate to his lords, the kings of Denmark.⁶⁴

Thorkell's Later Reputation

The *Encomium* was written at a time when many people could still remember the upheavals of the Danish Conquest (including Emma herself). If the author could take such liberties with the facts, what does that say about subsequent commentators, for whom the events which they recorded lay beyond the reach of living memory? It is often tacitly assumed that writers of, say, the twelfth century had access to information which has not come down to us, and that they can be used as 'contemporary' witnesses to events that happened long before their own times. This is to misunderstand medieval literary conventions – and it should be emphasized that in the middle ages, history was a branch of literature. Medieval writers were not concerned to re-create the past but to expound the present; as Bede says, their aim was to recount good things about good men, and bad things about evil men, so that their audience might be inspired to emulate the one and shun the other.⁶⁵ If they give a fuller account of events, it is not necessarily because they have access to lost information; medieval historians were just as capable as anyone else of making inferences from inadequate materials and padding the gaps with folklore, gossip and outright fiction. Sometimes, the picture they present of past events is demonstrably false, a point which

can be illustrated with reference to Thorkell's most famous (or infamous) achievement, the capture of Canterbury and the murder of Ælfheah.

Though the archbishop was venerated as a saint almost from the moment of his martyrdom, no *vita* was composed, nor any account of the *translatio* when the body was removed from London to Canterbury in 1023. The first hagiographer to work on his life was the Canterbury monk, Osbern, whose works were concerned to demonstrate Ælfheah's sanctity in the face of scepticism on the part of (among others) the current archbishop, Lanfranc. In Osbern's *Vita*, Thorkell appears as the traditional heathen pirate, but he fades out of the picture as the siege of Canterbury proceeds, and is not mentioned in the account of the archbishop's murder; nor does he appear in this context in John of Worcester, who drew on Osbern's account as well as that of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.⁶⁶ William of Malmesbury likewise omits Thorkell from his account of the Viking campaigns in Kent which culminated in Ælfheah's murder; only when recording his entry into Æthelred's service does he introduce 'Thurkil the Dane, who had instigated the stoning of the archbishop', thus contradicting the contemporary account of Thietmar of Merseberg.⁶⁷ In this instance, we actually have contemporary accounts with which to compare the later writers, which should give us pause when dealing with retrospective narratives for which no such comparison is possible.

Apart from these brief mentions in the accounts of Osbern of Canterbury, John of Worcester, and William of Malmesbury, Thorkell is virtually invisible in twelfth-century English historiography. Henry of Huntingdon, whose eastern connections might lead us to expect some fuller treatment, mentions him only in connection with the demand for payment of the Greenwich fleet in 1013.⁶⁸ The *Liber Benefactorum* of Ramsey Abbey, of mid twelfth-century date but possibly based on eleventh-century material, has a long story about a man called *Turkillus*, sprung from 'from a not ignoble Danish family' (*de stirpe non infima*

Danorum oriundus), who received land at Ellesmere (Cambs.) from Cnut; some have identified him as Thorkell the Tall but there is little to commend the identification.⁶⁹ The story, which includes some familiar elements – wicked stepmother consults malignant witch to kill stepson, boy's father seduced by evil wife into complicity to conceal the murder, perpetrators fall out and murder is revealed – may, at best, represent some vague recollection that someone called Thorkell was once a prominent figure in the locality; but the name is not rare in eleventh-century England, and the weak and culpable father may have been someone else entirely.⁷⁰

Thorkell is scarcely more prominent in twelfth-century Scandinavia.⁷¹ In the *Legendary Saga of St Olaf* (a thirteenth-century reworking of a twelfth-century source), Thorkell's fame attracts the young Olaf to join him in England; the saga also repeats the story (found in the *Encomium*) that Thorkell's expedition was undertaken as vengeance for a murdered brother.⁷² In Snorri Sturluson's subsequent version of Olaf's exploits, however, Thorkell is barely mentioned, and all his greatest deeds, including the victory at Ringmere and the capture of Canterbury, are appropriated to Olaf.⁷³

As Thorkell's historical career faded into the mists of time, his legendary life began to develop. In Oddr Snorrason's saga of the Norwegian king Óláfr Tryggvason, composed about 1190, Thorkell figures as a participant in the battle of Svöld (c.1000), though no earlier source records his presence, and Oddr may have included him because, by the time of writing, Thorkell was regarded as the brother of Sigvaldi, whose presence (but not Thorkell's) is attested by the skaldic verses on the battle.⁷⁴ Thorkell's alleged relationship with Sigvaldi takes us out of history and into legend, specifically into the world of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, aptly described as 'a literary creation of the late twelfth century'.⁷⁵ According to this saga, Sigvaldi and Thorkell were sons of an earl of Sjælland named Strút-Haraldr, so called because he had a cone-shaped hat (*strút*) laden with golden ornaments. They appear in the

latter half of the saga, where they are welcomed into the warrior-community of Jomsborg, and thrive to the extent that when Palna-Toki, the founder and first commander of the Jomsvikings, dies, he names Sigvaldi as his successor.

Sigvaldi's first solo exploit is the kidnap of King Swein of Denmark, who is kept for a while in honourable captivity in Jomsborg, before returning to his kingdom. Relations appear to be amicable (Sigvaldi and Swein marry the two daughters of the Wendish king) but Swein has not forgiven Sigvaldi. When Strút-Haraldr dies, Swein presides over the funeral feast, but tricks Sigvaldi and his companions into making rash boasts to drive Earl Hakon from Norway and seize his lands (of course everyone is drunk – except Swein, presumably). In the cold light of dawn, Sigvaldi and his companions repent of their boasts but are unable to lose face by withdrawing, and set out against Hakon in his stronghold of Hlaðir (near modern Trondheim in Norway). Then follows the great set-piece of the battle of Hjörungavágr, in which Hakon is victorious, thanks to the aid of his tutelary goddess Thorgerðr Holgabrúdr and her sister Irpa, who not only raise an ice-storm but also shoot arrows from the tips of all their fingers at the unfortunate Jomsvikings. Most of them are killed or captured, though Sigvaldi prudently withdraws from the battle when the goddesses appear, and returns to Sjælland (a touch of Monty Python's 'Brave Sir Robin' there, I fear).

It is noticeable that Thorkell's role in all this is subsidiary to that of his brother Sigvaldi; in the description of the battle (which takes up several chapters) he figures in the opening line-up but nothing is said of his deeds, and his next appearance is after Sigvaldi's withdrawal, when he follows his brother. The reason for this reticence may be that although there is a considerable amount of skaldic verse on the battle of Hjörungavágr, none of it mentions Thorkell, though Sigvaldi figures prominently.⁷⁶ Thorkell's subsidiary role is re-emphasized in the last chapter of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, which records the eventual fate of the survivors:

Sigvaldi becomes earl of Sjøælland, and various other ex-Jomsvikings prosper and found families, but all the saga-writer has to say of Thorkell is that he 'was considered a shrewd man, as proved to be the case many times after'; an interesting remark, since (according to Campbell) Thorkell's wisdom is also stressed in the *Legendary Saga of St Olaf*.⁷⁷ Nor is Thorkell mentioned in the version of the battle of Hjörungavágr included in Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* (c.1230), and though he is mentioned in *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, composed by Bjarni Kolbeinsson, bishop of Orkney (1188–1223), the hero of that lay is another Jomsviking, Vagn Akason.⁷⁸

Conclusion: Saving Thorkell from the Historians

Jómsvíkinga saga is evidence for Thorkell's reputation in twelfth-century Scandinavia, which suggests that while his name survived, little was known of his actual deeds. Whether the saga tells us anything of value about his family origins or early career is also dubious. There has been much speculation among later historians, notably on the matter of Strút-Haraldr's youngest son Hemming, whom *Jómsvíkinga saga* mentions only in passing.⁷⁹ The treatment of the relationship between Thorkell and Hemming is in fact a nice illustration of the historical ploy known as 'scissors and paste'. It goes like this. The *Encomium* (composed in 1041–2) says that Thorkell's assault on England was undertaken in revenge for an unnamed brother, killed in a massacre of the thingmen (one thinks instinctively of the massacre of St Brice's Day, 1002).⁸⁰ John of Worcester (writing around 1120) adds that one of the commanders of the Danish fleet who joined Thorkell in 1009 was called Hemming.⁸¹ Finally, *Jómsvíkinga saga* (written in the late twelfth century) gives Thorkell a brother called Hemming. It is on coincidences like these that historians pounce like leopards, lifting juicy titbits out of their contexts and stringing them together into a plausible story. What does not fit – for example,

the fact that if Hemming joined Thorkell to ravage Kent in 1009 he cannot have been killed in a previous massacre – is ignored or explained away as the inevitable confusion of oral tradition. In fact there is a little, very tenuous, evidence to suggest that Thorkell *might* have had a father called Haraldr and a brother called Hemming, but this is a long way from accepting that his father was the earl of Sjøælland and his brother the celebrated Jomsviking Sigvaldi.⁸² As for the supplement to *Jómsvíkinga saga*, in which Thorkell marries King Æthelred's daughter Ulfhildr, widow of Ulfcytel *snilling*, the less said the better; though this has not prevented the appearance of Ulfhildr, in her Old English guise of 'Wulfhild', as a daughter of Æthelred in various family-trees of the West Saxon line.⁸³

When writing the history of early and sparsely recorded times, we should, I think, pay more attention to contemporary sources than to later ones and mistrust anything which cannot be corroborated. A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, my supervisor taught me that the historian's prime duty, no matter how good the story, how authoritative the source, was to ask 'what evidence do you have for that statement?'⁸⁴ All history is a construct, but it is up to us to distinguish the probable from the possible, and both from the merely imaginary. As for Thorkell's posthumous career, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that 'the story had been picked over so many times, and had been embroidered in so many places, that nobody was quite sure what the truth was any more'.⁸⁵ Shorn of his real deeds, Thorkell's name survived to enter the pantheon of the legendary heroes. Even today he has a flourishing role in the world of Manga – whatever that is.⁸⁶

Notes

1. An earlier version of this chapter was also read to the University of Wales' 2011 medieval symposium at Gregynog (Powys), whose theme was 'Heroes and Villains'. I am grateful to the participants, both at Gregynog and subsequently at the Winchester Conference, for the lively discussions, which threw up a number of interesting considerations.

2. S. D. Keynes, 'An Abbot, an Archbishop, and the Viking Raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12', *ASE* 36 (2007), pp. 151–220.
3. G. Rice, 'Alumunus Football', in *Only the Brave and Other Poems* (New York, 1941).
4. E. Christiansen, *The Norsemen in the Viking Age* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 308–309 (quotation on p. 308); see also pp. 27–31. Skaldic verse continued to be written up to the end of the middle ages in Iceland and elsewhere, but its great days belong to the late Viking Age.
5. M. Townend, 'Contextualizing the *Knútsdrápur*: Skaldic Praise-Poetry at the Court of Cnut', *ASE* 30 (2001), pp. 145–79; R. Frank, 'King Cnut in the Verse of his Skalds', in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. R. Rumble (London, 1994), pp. 106–24.
6. Townend, 'Contextualizing the *Knútsdrápur*', pp. 151 and 161–63 (quotation on p. 163); R. G. Poole, 'Skaldic verse and the Anglo-Saxon Historian: Some Aspects of the Period 1009–1016', *Speculum* 62 (1987), pp. 265–98, at pp. 284–86; *Viking Poems on War and Peace* (Toronto, 1991), pp. 86–115, at pp. 99–106.
7. Thietmar of Merseberg, *Chronicon*, VII. 41–3, trans. D. A. Warner, *Ottomanian Germany: the Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseberg* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 336–7; *ASC CDE* 1009, 1013 and see also *CD* 1020, *CDE* 1021. For the date of the underlying 'Æthelredian' chronicle, see S. Keynes, 'The Declining Reputation of Æthelred the Unready', in *Æthelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed. D. Hill, *BAR British Ser.* 59 (1978), pp. 227–53.
8. U 344 (Uppland, Sweden), dated c. 1020, in J. Insley, 'Onomastic Notes on Cnut's Slavonic Connections', in *A Commodity of Good Names: Essays in Honour of Margaret Gelling*, ed. O. J. Padel and D. N. Parsons (Donington, 2008), pp. 147–53 at pp. 148–9. It is possible that U 344 was erected in Ulf's lifetime; Ali, who 'took Knútr's payment in England' announced the fact on a stone raised by himself (U 194, from Väsby, also in Uppland). Ulf's stone, however, was once accompanied by a second stone (U 343, now lost), raised by his sons Karsi and Karlbjörn in their father's memory, and if they were intended to form a single monument, Ulf must have been dead at the time (Details of runic inscriptions, with translations, can be accessed via Rundata 2.5 for Windows, Uppsala Universitet, *Samnordisk runtextdatabas* (*Scandinavian runic-text database*), <<http://www.nordiska.uu.se/forskn/samnord.htm>>).
9. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos. 950–6 (Cnut); no. 926 (Æthelred); *Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis*, ed. W. Dunn Macray, *RS* 83 (London, 1886), p. 147; D. Whitelock, 'Scandinavian Personal Names in the Liber Vitae of Thorney Abbey', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society* 12 (1937–45), pp. 127–53 at pp. 131–2; Keynes, 'Cnut's Earls', p. 56, n. 65.
10. M. Lapidge, 'Byrthferth and Oswald', in *St Oswald of Worcester: his Life and Influence*, ed. N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (London, 1996), pp. 64–83, at pp. 75–79; C. R. Hart, 'The Early Section of the *Worcester Chronicle*', *Journal of Medieval History* 9 (1983), pp. 251–315; JW, pp. lxxix–lxxxi. See also E. John, *Reassessing Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 159–60.
11. *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed. A. Campbell, *Camden 3rd Ser.* 72 (London, 1949; repr., with introduction by S. Keynes, Cambridge, 1998).
12. *ASC CDE* 1009.
13. JW, s.a. 1009, pp. 462–3.
14. M. Ashdown, *English and Norse Documents Relating to the Reign of Æthelred the Unready* (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 158–81; C. Fell, 'Vikingavisur', in *Speculum Norroenum: Norse Studies in Memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre* (Odense, 1981), pp. 106–22. In his *Vita* of St Ælfheah, Osbern of Canterbury makes King Swein Forkbeard take part in the campaigns of 1011, but this is merely a (mistaken) guess (see further above, pp. 150–51).
15. U 344 (see also n. 8 above).
16. Keynes, 'An Abbot, an Archbishop, and the Viking Raids', p. 157. Tostig has been identified as Skoglar-Tostig, father of one of Swein Forkbeard's wives, but if so, it is likely that his English adventure should be dated to one of the earlier incursions, between 993 and 1002 (Insley, 'Onomastic notes on Cnut's Slavonic connections', pp. 148–49); see also N. Lund, 'The Danish Perspective', in *The Battle of Maldon AD 991*, ed. D. Scragg (Oxford, 1991), pp. 114–42, at p. 117.
17. The *ASC* records the payment of tribute (*gafol*) in 1007, but does not mention the fleet's dispersal.
18. G. Fellows-Jensen, *The Vikings and their Victims: the Verdict of the Names*, The Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies, University College London, 21 February 1994 (London, 1995), pp. 8–9.
19. The attack on London is recorded in Óttarr *svarti's* *Höfuðlausn* and Sigvatr's *Vikingavisur*, but in both the starring role is given to their hero Ólafr *helgi*. In Sigvatr's work there is some confusion with the successful siege of London in 1016, but in 1009

- Thorkell's army was beaten off; the *ASC*, whose author may have been a Londoner, records that 'they always suffered loss there'.
20. Sigvatr Thorðarson has at least part of the host lying at Southwark, but he seems to be confusing the unsuccessful attack on London in 1009 with the successful siege by Cnut's army in 1016 (Fell, '*Vikingavisur*', stanza 6, p. 115; see further *Encomium*, ed. Campbell, p. 77 n. 4).
 21. *ASC* CDE 1009; see also A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready: the Ill-Counselled King* (London, 2003), pp. 98–9.
 22. T. Tatton-Brown, 'The Towns of Kent', in *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, ed. J. Haslam (Chichester, 1984), pp. 1–36, at p. 17.
 23. *ASC* CDE 992 and 1009.
 24. *ASC* CDE 1004. Sigvatr too sites the battle 'in Ulfcytel's land' (*á Ulfkels landi*); Fell, '*Vikingavisur*', p. 116. It was Scandinavian tradition which conferred on Ulfcytel his by-name *snillingr*: 'the bold'. The name was not common in Scandinavia and it may therefore be significant that Ulf of Borresta, one of Thorkell's followers, called his son Ulfketil (Fellows-Jensen, *The Vikings and their Victims*, pp. 9–10).
 25. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, pp. 24–25. Compare the behaviour of the 'great fleet' in 1006, which, after harrying across Wessex, 'turned along Ashdown to Cuckhamsley Barrow, and waited there for what had been proudly threatened, for it had often been said that if they went to Cuckhamsley, they would never get to the sea' (*ASC* CDE 1006).
 26. Another shipske, associated with the bishop of Sherborne, lost land at Corscombe, Dors., between 1007 and 1014 'because of the attacks and ravages of the evil Danes'; Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 933. See Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, pp. 99–100.
 27. *ASC* CDE 1011. Whitelock translates *asmeade* as 'ransacked' but 'thoroughly searched' is perhaps closer to the meaning; see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, trans. and ed. M. Swanton (London 1996), p. 142. There is little indication that Canterbury was sacked in 1011: see A. Williams, 'The Dangers of Invention: the Sack of Canterbury, 1011, and the "Theft" of Dunstan's Relics', in *Cathedrals, Communities and Conflict in the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. P. Dalton, C. Insley, and L. J. Wilkinson (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 27–40.
 28. At the meeting in Gregynnog, a member of the audience pointed out that in one traditional method of slaughter, animals are killed by being struck on the head with the back of the axe, to render them unconscious (one hopes!) while their throats are cut. Was the killer of Ælfheah deliberately belittling his victim?
 29. Thietmar, *Chronicon*, VII.42–3, trans. Warner, p. 336.
 30. Thietmar, *Chronicon*, VII.42–3, trans. Warner, p. 337; 'Sewald' might represent OE *Seweald*, but it has been suggested that it represents ON Sigvaldi, the name of Thorkell's brother in some later sources (see below). Thietmar's interest in English matters arose from the involvement of one of his *bêtes noires*, Swein Forkbeard, king of Denmark and (briefly) England, and brother-in-law of Boleslav 'the Brave', duke of the Poles (992–1025), a thorn in the side of the Emperor Henry II. If it was Sewald who supplied the material behind Thietmar's garbled and inaccurate account of Cnut's siege of London in 1016, his reliability must be considered suspect, though the role which he gives to Æthelred's widowed queen as commander of the English defence is borne out by Scandinavian tradition: see Poole, *Viking Poems on War and Peace*, pp. 89 and 113. The *Encomium Emmae* does not mention Emma's presence in London in 1016, but by the time of its writing Emma was anxious to distance herself from her first marriage, and present Cnut as her only husband (Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, pp. 140–42). Thietmar's statement (*Chronicon*, VII.37, trans. Warner, p. 333) that it was an Englishwoman who arranged the removal of King Swein Forkbeard's body from England to Denmark is perhaps also accurate, since a similar story does appear in the *Encomium Emmae* (ed. Campbell, pp. 79–80). The lady in question may have been Swein's daughter-in-law, Ælfgifu of Northampton, Cnut's wife (see Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 127).
 31. If Thietmar was told of the assassination of an unnamed archbishop of Canterbury, it would be natural for him to supply the name of the best-known incumbent of the see.
 32. The language of the *ASC* is ambiguous, and it is not absolutely clear that the 'Saturday' on which the archbishop refused to allow a ransom to be paid is the same day as 'the eve of the Sunday of the octave of Easter' on which he was murdered. JW (s.a. 1012, pp. 470–71), who used the *ASC* as one of his sources, assumed a week's gap between the two events, saying that Ælfheah refused the ransom (of £3,000) on Holy Saturday, but that the host 'put off his death to the next Saturday' (*necem eius usque ad aliud sabbatum protelant*).
 33. On the other hand, this might be a *topos*: bone- and

- missile-throwing is quite common in subsequent descriptions of drunken Viking feasts. In fact, it has been suggested that the killing of the archbishop may not have been intentional but rather the result of a bout of drunken horseplay which went wrong: see I. McDougall, 'Serious Entertainments: a Peculiar Type of Viking Atrocity', *ASE* 22 (1993), pp. 201–25.
34. In 1013, Thorkell demanded pay and provisions for 'the army that lay at Greenwich' and the same army received £21,000 in the following year (*ASC* CDE 1013, 1014). See also n. 39, below.
 35. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 926.
 36. *ASC* CDE 1012, 1013; *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 10–11.
 37. *ASC* CD 1012; MS E, perhaps appreciating the difficulty, reverses the word-order to make the bishops bring the body to London.
 38. *ASC* CDE 1013.
 39. It is true that Thorkell is not named as the commander in 1014, and the situation is complicated by the fact that Æthelred had secured the services of Olaf *helgi* during his sojourn in Normandy; but if Thorkell had defected, it is likely that the chronicler, whose indignation against the payment of 1014 is clear, would have mentioned it.
 40. *ASC* CDE 1015.
 41. JW, s.a. 1015, pp. 480–81. For the Mercian ship-levy, see *ASC* C 1050, discussed in A. Williams, *Kingship and Government in pre-Conquest England, c.500–1066* (London, 1999), pp. 142–43.
 42. Poole, 'Liðsmannaflokk', in *Viking Poems on War and Peace*, pp. 102–103; E. A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England, its Causes and its Results*, Vol. 1 (London, 2nd edn, 1870), p. 374, admits both possibilities, since after Æthelred's death, Thorkell's 'allegiance to his old master was no longer binding'.
 43. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 74–75.
 44. E. John, 'The Return of the Vikings', in *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed. J. Campbell (Oxford, 1982), pp. 192–213, at p. 208.
 45. Poole, *Viking Poems*, p. 115.
 46. Poole, *Viking Poems*, pp. 106–107; cf. p. 101: 'whichever side he fought on, Þorkell was an independent war-lord first and an ally or subject second'.
 47. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. liv–lv and 74–75. See discussion below.
 48. *ASC* CDE 1017. Eadric *streona* was murdered later in the same year.
 49. Keynes, 'Cnut's Earls', p. 56 and p. 53, table 4.1.
- Thorkell also heads the list of earls in the Thorney *Liber Vitae* (Whitelock, 'Scandinavian personal names', pp. 131–32).
50. *EHD* 1, no. 48.
 51. *ASC* CD 1020. See also JW's account: 'In the same year [1020] the church which King Cnut and Earl Thorkel had erected on the hill which is called [Assandun] was dedicated with great ceremony and glory in their presence by Wulfstan, archbishop of York, and many other bishops' (pp. 506–507).
 52. *ASC* CDE 1021; C 1023. It has been objected that Harthacnut, Cnut's son by his second wife, was in England in June 1023, and thus could not have been entrusted to Thorkell at this time; however, Cnut had two sons, Harald and Swein, by his English wife, Ælfgifu of Northampton.
 53. William of Malmesbury, whose information on Thorkell is less than reliable, alleges that he was killed 'by the nobles' after his return to Denmark as regent (WM, *GRA*, 181.3, pp. 320–21). The source for this information was probably Osbern of Canterbury's *Translatio Sancti Ælfgi* (ed. and trans. A. R. Rumble and R. Morris, 'Textual Appendix', in *Reign of Cnut*, ed. Rumble, pp. 283–315, at pp. 298–99), which says that Thorkell remained in England as a pillager until he was exiled by Cnut to Denmark and subsequently killed.
 54. See Townend, 'Contextualizing the *Knútsdrápur*', pp. 162–4. Townend dates Óttar svarti's *Knútsdrápa* to c.1027, and that of Sigvatr Thorðarson to the same year; Þórarinn loftunga's *Hofudlausn* to c.1027–8 and *Togdrapa* to c.1029; Hallvarðr haresklesi's *Knútsdrapa* to c.1029, and the fragmentary *Knútsdrapa* of Arnorr to c.1031–5 (p. 162).
 55. See Campbell's comment (*Encomium Emmae*, p. lv): 'Since the Encomiast has been detected of handling the story of Thorkell in a dishonest manner, it will be necessary to use great circumspection in considering all his further references to him'.
 56. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 20–23. *Liðsmannaflokk* might be read to imply that Thorkell had a role in the successful siege of London in 1016, but the Encomiast gives the credit for this to Eiríkr (pp. 22–23).
 57. *ASC* CDE 1016 places the battle of Sherston 'after midsummer'. Thietmar of Merseberg also has an account of a battle which might be Sherston (it takes place during the siege of London, as did Sherston), in which the Danish force was commanded by a Jarl Thurgut, and the English by Æthelstan and Edmund, sons of the widowed English queen (Thietmar, *Chronicon*, VII.40–1, trans. Warner,

- pp. 335–36); both Thurgut and Edmund were killed, but Æthelstan survived to raise the siege of London. It might be that this is a garbled reference to Thorkell, but Thietmar gets his name right in his account of the murder of Ælfheah (see above, n. 31), nor does he erroneously call Thorkell ‘earl’. There are other problems with the account; Æthelstan and Edmund were not the sons of Æthelred’s widow; Edmund survived Sherston (as did Thorkell, if he was there), and Æthelstan died in 1014.
58. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell pp. 24–25; see Campbell’s comments, pp. lvii–lix.
 59. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 10–11. Commenting on this issue, in her second edition of *EHD 1*, p. 139, Dorothy Whitelock observed that ‘it may well be that Thorkell’s historical defection to the English side was much debated at that time, and the author has not gone to the trouble of reconciling different theories regarding his motives.’ For a discussion of this, see also Poole, *Viking Poems*, p. 102.
 60. The quotation is Campbell’s (*Encomium Emmae*, pp. 16–17). Thorkell’s role is developed by William of Malmesbury, who, in a passage strongly reminiscent of Gildas, has Thorkell invite Swein to come and conquer the idle and disorganized English: WM, *GRA*, 176, pp. 300–301.
 61. Osbern of Canterbury places Cnut’s exile of Thorkell immediately after his own invasion (in 1015, though no date is given) ‘because of certain deeds which had been evilly and perfidiously done’ (*Translatio Sancti Ælfegi*, ed. and trans. Rumble and Morris, pp. 298–99).
 62. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 16–17 and 18–19. These events must belong to the spring or early summer of 1015.
 63. See S. Keynes, ‘Introduction to the 1998 Reprint’, in *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell [reprint version], pp. lxix–lxxi.
 64. One of Harthacnut’s earls, Harald, was perhaps Thorkell’s son, fostered by Cnut (see n. 82, below).
 65. Bede, *HE*, preface, pp. 3–4. ‘Should history tell of good men and their good estate, the thoughtful listener is spurred on to imitate the good; should it record the evil ends of wicked men, no less effectually the devout and earnest listener or reader is kindled to eschew what is harmful or perverse’.
 66. H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra* (London, 2 vols, 1691), Vol. 2, p. 131; JW, s.a. 1011, pp. 468–71. See Williams, ‘Dangers of Invention’, pp. 33–35. Osbern actually says that Thorkell succeeded Swein in the *principatum* of the Danes (‘but when Swein was mightily struck down by God, Thorkell was chosen by lot to the leadership of the evil lineage’ [*Sed Swano ab omnipotenti Deo terribiliter occiso, Thyrkellus malignae haereditatis Principatum sortitus est*]). For Osbern’s treatment of Thorkell in the *Translatio* of Ælfheah, see n. 52 above.
 67. WM, *GRA*, 165.5, pp. 272–73, and 176, pp. 300–301; he repeats the accusation when recording Thorkell’s murder in Denmark after being exiled from England (pp. 320–21).
 68. Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People*, ed. and trans. D. Greenway (Oxford, 1996), VI.9, pp. 352–53.
 69. *Chron. Rams.*, ed. Macray, pp. 129–34.
 70. See C. R. Hart, *The Early Charters of Eastern England* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 49 and 236–37.
 71. Thorkell does not figure in the works of Adam of Bremen, Sven Aggeson or Saxo Grammaticus.
 72. The *Legendary saga* dates from the thirteenth century but preserves fragments of the lost *Oldest Saga of St Olaf*, which probably dates from the latter half of the twelfth century (*Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 73 and 88).
 73. *Snorri Sturluson Heimskringla. Part One: The Olaf Sagas*, trans. S. Laing (London and Melbourne, 2 vols, 1964), Vol. 1, pp. 122–27. The work was composed c.1230.
 74. Oddr Snorrason’s saga of Óláfr Tryggvasson was composed c.1190, but is now known only from the slightly later Icelandic translations: see *The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason: Oddr Snorrason*, trans. T. M. Andersson (Ithaca and London, 2003). See also *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, p. 73.
 75. L. P. Slupecki, ‘Fact and Fantasy in *Jómsvíkinga saga*’, University of Durham conference papers <www.dur.ac.uk/medieval/www/sagaconf/slupecki.pdf> (accessed 27 Jan. 2011); see also J. Jesch, ‘History in the ‘Political Sagas’, *Medium Ævum* 63 (1993), pp. 210–20. The text is translated, with introduction and notes, in *The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. N. F. Blake (London, 1962).
 76. *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, p. 73. The names of four skalds present, all on the Norwegian side, are listed in *The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. Blake, p. 33.
 77. *The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. Blake, ch. 38, p. 43; *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, p. 73.
 78. *Snorri Sturluson Heimskringla. Part One: The Olaf Sagas*, trans. Laing, Vol. 1, pp. 38–40. Bjarni Kolbeinsson’s poem may be one of the sources for *Jómsvíkinga saga* itself (*Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. Blake, p. xvi); it is translated by Judith Jesch

in *The Triumph Tree: Scotland's Earliest Poetry AD 550–1350*, ed. T. O. Clancy, Canongate Scottish Classics (Edinburgh, 1998), pp. 225–35.

79. *Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. Blake, ch. 26.

80. The fame of St Brice's Day should not preclude the possibility of other 'Dane-slayings'; see A. Boyle, 'Death on the Dorset Ridgeway: the Discovery and Excavation of an Early Medieval Mass Burial', above, pp. 114–20.

81. JW, s.a. 1009, pp. 462–63.

82. In 1044 Gunnhild, 'King Cnut's kinswoman' was exiled from England (*ASC* D 1044). JW adds that she was the daughter of Cnut's sister (unnamed) and Wyrtegeorn, king of the Wends, and that she was the widow of Earl Hakon, and after his death, Earl Harold; with her were exiled her sons, Hemming and Thorkell (JW, s.a. 1044, pp. 540–41). Hakon, son of Cnut's ally Eiríkr of Hladir, was given an English earldom in the 1020s, probably centred on Worcestershire, for he abstracted certain estates from the bishopric of Worcester, which were retained after his death (in 1030) by his widow Gunnhild (*Hemíngi Chartularium Ecclesie Wigornensis*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 2 vols, 1723), Vol. 1, pp. 251–52). An Earl Harold attests a Worcester lease of 1042 (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1396), which suggests that he succeeded Hakon as earl, as well as marrying his widow. The interesting fact is the names of Gunnhild's sons, Hemming and Thorkell; it seems unlikely that Hakon would have given his children such names, and they may therefore be her sons by Harold. Were they named after Harold's father, Thorkell the Tall and his uncle, Hemming? And was

Harold in turn named after his grandfather? Alas, we shall never know. See A. Williams, "'Cockles amongst the Wheat': Danes and English in the West Midlands in the First Half of the Eleventh Century', *Midland History* 11 (1986), pp. 1–22, at pp. 9–11, where Gunnhild's second husband is wrongly identified with the Harold killed in 1042 in Saxony: this was Harold, son of King Cnut's brother in law, Jarl Ulfr.

83. There is little to add to the discussion by Campbell, *Encomium*, pp. 87–91. Ulfhildr, even in its OE form (Wulfhild) is an unlikely name for a daughter of the West Saxon royal house. Æthelred had at least two daughters, Ælfgifu, who married Uhtred, and Eadgyth, who married Eadric *streona*; both spouses were ealdormen, as Ulfcytel was not. Since JW (s.a. 1021, pp. 506–507) gives Thorkell a wife called *Edgitha* (Eadgyth), itself a fairly common name, Freeman (*History of the Norman Conquest*, Vol. 1, pp. 655–56) suggested that it was the widow of Eadric rather than Ulfcytel that Thorkell married; another example of the 'scissors and paste' method of historical investigation.

84. R. R. Darlington; all his postgraduate students will remember this phrase.

85. J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (London, 2009), p. 7.

86. An internet search for 'Thorkell Vinland saga' will bring up examples. For a more serious engagement with popular depictions of Vikings, including Thorkell, see L. Céspedes González, 'Some Reflections on Danes in Wessex Today', below, p. 256.

CHAPTER TEN

A Place in the Country: Orc of Abbotsbury and Tole of Tolpuddle, Dorset

Ann Williams

In 1044, Edward the Confessor granted 5 *perticae* of land at *Wudetune* (Abbotts Wootton in Whitchurch Canonorum, Dorset) to his faithful thegn, 'who after the fashion of his own people was known from infancy by the name Orc' (*qui iuxta sue proprie gentis consuetudinem ab infantili etate nomen accepit Orc*).¹ Orc is a very unusual name. It occurs only once in Domesday Book, in the Surrey folios, where 'a certain Orc' (*quidam Orcus*) held 2 hides belonging to Earl Harold's manor of Merton, which he continued to hold after the Conquest.² The name's meaning is uncertain, but since 'the only certain occurrence of it outside England is in a patronymic in a runic inscription in Maeshowe in Orkney', it might be a byname signifying 'man from Orkney'.³ What this implies for Orc of Abbotsbury's origins is unclear, though it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that an Orkneyman should have been in the service of an English king.

The rarity of his name allows the Orc who received land at Wootton in Dorset to be identified with the thegn *Orcy* to whom Cnut granted 7 hides at Portesham, also in Dorset, in 1024.⁴ The cartulary of Abbotsbury Abbey, lost but partially reconstructed from later transcripts, contained a second charter of Cnut in favour of Orc, granting him 17 hides at Abbotsbury (Dors.).⁵ The surviving transcript is incomplete and does not include a dating-clause, but 'the formulation as a whole is closely related to that of King Cnut's charter

granting land at Horton, in Dorset, to Bovi, dated 1033'.⁶ This diploma survives in the archives of Sherborne, of which Horton became a cell, and among the *ministri* who attest it is one *Urki*; both Bovi and *Urki* attest a further diploma of Cnut, granting land at Corscombe (Dors.) to Sherborne.⁷ *Urki* also attests Harthacnut's diploma of 1042 granting land at Farnborough (Berks.) to Abingdon Abbey, and two diplomas of Edward the Confessor relating to Wiltshire, one in 1043 as *Urki*, the other in 1045 as *Urc*.⁸

The identity of Orc and Urk[i] is proven by a writ of Edward the Confessor addressed to the shire-court of Dorset, which declares that 'Urk my housecarl' is to have the right of wreck on 'his shore, all that is over against his own land', for although the location of 'his shore' is not specified, the context of the writ's preservation (an *inspeximus* charter for Abbotsbury Abbey) implies that it comprised the western end of Chesil Beach, opposite Abbotsbury. A second writ of the Confessor, preserved in the same context, gives permission to Orc's widow Tole to bequeathe their property to St Peter's, Abbotsbury.⁹ It is as the founders of Abbotsbury Abbey that Orc and Tole are best known and most of our information about them comes from the archive of that house, which includes, as well as the aforesaid writs and the remnants of the lost cartulary, a group of single-sheet originals now in the Dorset County Archives.¹⁰

Another charter in the lost cartulary was a

diploma of Cnut in favour of Bovi, and though only the clause reserving the common dues has survived, this is sufficient to show that it was not the diploma of 1033 relating to Horton, preserved in the Sherborne archive.¹¹ Why a royal charter for Bovi should be kept at Abbotsbury we cannot know, but the fact that it was suggests some connection between himself and Orc. One obvious link is their status; just as Orc is described as *min huscarl* in King Edward's writ, so Bovi appears as a housecarl of Cnut in the endorsement to the Horton diploma of 1033.¹² Bovi bears a Scandinavian name, and one could deduce that both he and Orc were Scandinavians who entered England in the wake of the Danish conquest, an assumption borne out in Orc's case by the statement in the diploma for Wootton (quoted above) that he had been named 'after the fashion of his own people'; evidently he was not English.

It is to be expected that the Danish conquest of the English kingdom in 1016, like that of the Normans fifty years later, would be followed by grants of land to the followers of the new king.¹³ Cnut produced no Domesday Book to record the Danish settlement, but its effects can be traced not only in the north and east of England but also in the shires of Wessex and western Mercia.¹⁴ Orc and Bovi were not the only Scandinavian followers of Cnut to receive land in Dorset, for as early as 1019 he had granted 16 hides at Cheselbourne to a *minister* who, though not described as a housecarl, bears the Norse name Aghmundr.¹⁵ Aghmundr's charter is attested by Bovi, and Aghmundr in turn attested Cnut's charter granting Portesham to Orc.¹⁶ That they were not the only members of Cnut's military household to receive land in Dorset is suggested by the fact that in 1066 all four Dorset boroughs were burdened with payments *ad opus huscarlium regis*, of a kind found nowhere else in the kingdom.¹⁷ Whether these boroughs were garrisoned with contingents of the king's household troops is uncertain (and perhaps unlikely), but Cnut may have had some special interest in the shire; it was at Shaftesbury that he died in 1035.¹⁸

We know of Orc, Bovi and Aghmundr only because the lands which they received subsequently came into the hands of ecclesiastical institutions who preserved their diplomas.¹⁹ The renders from the Dorset boroughs raise the question of how many other Scandinavians settled in the shire. The Dorset folios of Domesday Book record at least five names of Scandinavian origin among the pre-Conquest landholders: *Anschil/Aschil*, *Azor*, *Boln/Bollo*, *Bondi/Bundi* and *Tol*, plus *Bern*, which might represent either OE Beorn or ON Bjarni.²⁰ There is also a *Toxus*, to whom a king's reeve had (apparently) leased pasture at Swyre; the name might represent ON Toki, but the land concerned was attached to a manor held before the Conquest by *Tol* and might simply be a variant form of this name (see further, below).²¹

How many individuals are represented by these names is another matter. Bolli (*Bollo*) the priest held land at Mappowder, with 'seven other free thegns' (*alii vii liberis tainis*); since he continued to hold Mappowder in 1086 as a king's thegn, he can probably be identified with Bolli the priest who held other lands in Dorset in 1086.²² Whether he was also the *Boln* who held half a hide at Creech which passed to the wife of Hugh fitzGrip is less certain.²³ Two hides at Knowle belonged to *Bern*, whose name is also found in Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, and possibly in Devon and Yorkshire as well, though it cannot be established whether all the references are to the same man.²⁴ Bondi is a much commoner name, but one with a relatively restricted distribution in Domesday Book, which is presumably why both the *Bundi* who held 10 hides at Compton and the *Bondi* who held 20 hides at Broadwindsor have been identified with the rich landowner Bondi the staller, whose estates were spread over ten shires from East Anglia to Wessex.²⁵ Whether this identification is correct is another matter; there are no indications of identity other than the name, and it is not even certain that the holder of Compton is the same individual as the holder of Broadwindsor.

The names of *Anschil*, who held 2 virgates

at Gillingham, and *Aschil*, who held 3 hides at Wimborne, both represent the Scandinavian Askell, but again there is nothing to connect the Dorset holder (or holders) with other men of the same name, which is not rare.²⁶ The most that can be said is that the second element of the name *Askell* seems to have replaced an older form in *-ketill* in the late tenth century, so that men bearing names with the contracted second element (Askell, Thorkell, Ulfkell) are most probably eleventh-century newcomers, while those whose names include the uncontracted, often anglicized form (Oscytel, Thorketil, Ulfcytel) may be descendants of ninth- and tenth-century settlers.²⁷

One of the commonest and most widespread Scandinavian names in Domesday Book is Azur (*Azor*), which renders identification of the holders of lands at Hethfelton, Briantspuddle, and Ailwood impossible; it is not even certain whether one, two, or three individuals are represented.²⁸ The land at Ailwood had passed by 1086 to Swein, whose three other Dorset tenements had belonged to his unnamed father, as had his land at Stapleford (Wilts.).²⁹ It is possible that Azur of Ailwood was Swein's father, in which case he held upwards of 30 hides in Wiltshire and Dorset, possibly in respect of some ministerial function, since Swein appears among the *taini regis* of 1086.³⁰ It has been suggested that he was identical with Swein Azur's son who in 1086 held 4 hides at Stoke Bruern (Northants), with twenty-two houses in Northampton itself, but both names were very common and the identification is unlikely.³¹

We are on firmer ground with *Tol*, all of whose land in Dorset had passed by 1086 to William d'Eu, for he must be the man who appears as William's antecessor in Hampshire, Wiltshire, Devon and probably Somerset.³² His name has, up to now, been normalised as ON Toli, but the various forms in which it appears in Domesday Book (*Teolf*, *Tholi*, *Tol*, *Toli*, *Tou*, *Toul*, *Tous*, perhaps even *Toxos*) suggest that Tholf is the correct form.³³ His total estate, assessed at 96 hides, more than half of which (49½ hides) lay in Dorset, puts him into

the category of a superior thegn (*procer*).³⁴ Not only is his name Scandinavian, but in the Hampshire folios he is called 'the Dane' (*dacus*), and is said to hold of King Edward.³⁵

Not all men with Scandinavian names were necessarily Danish, but the converse is also true; not all Danes bore Old Norse names. John, whose lands at Milborne St Andrew and Owermoigne had passed to Matthew de Mortagne, can be identified as Matthew's antecessor at Shipton Moyne (Glos.) and Clevedon (Som.), and the entry for Clevedon in Exon Domesday calls him John the Dane.³⁶ The rarity of his name suggests that he is the John *danus* whose land at Yatton (Som.) passed to Giso of Wells.³⁷ He or his heir may have continued to hold Yatton as the bishop's man, for Northmann John's son attests a charter of Bishop Giso relating to a sale of land in Somerset in 1072.³⁸ John the Dane's pre-Conquest holding of 50¼ hides would have given him the status of a *procer*.³⁹

The Dorset landholders with Scandinavian names need not all have been Cnut's retainers or their sons but, taken with other indications, their number suggests that Orc, Bovi, and Aghmundr were not the only royal housecarls to receive land in the shire. One certain companion of Orc is his wife Tole, who gave her name to Tolpuddle (Dors.). She survived her husband, for in a writ dating from the period 1058–66, Edward the Confessor gave her permission to bequeathe her lands and possessions to St Peter's, Abbotsbury, as previously arranged with her husband 'after the death of both of them'.⁴⁰ Domesday Book duly records Abbotsbury as the holder of 2½ hides at Abbots Wootton, given by Edward to Tole, which presumably included the 5 *perticae* in the same place which he had previously granted to Orc.⁴¹ We do not know when Orc died, but since the writ granting him right of wreck was addressed to Bishop Ælfwold of Sherborne who died in 1058, whereas the Confessor's writ to Tole is addressed to his successor, Bishop Hermann, the late 1050s seems most likely.⁴²

Like her husband, Tole bears a Scandinavian name, though this does not mean that she came

to England straight from Denmark. The lost foundation charter of Abbotsbury Abbey apparently described her as a noblewoman from Rouen, and it has been suggested that she might have been in the household of Emma, King Æthelred's widow, who married Cnut in 1017.⁴³ If true, this could account for her prominence in the surviving sources, for when, in the Confessor's reign, one of Queen Edith's ladies with the continental name of Matilda married Ælfgeard, a thegn of the bishop of Worcester, the event was sufficiently important to be recorded in the church's cartulary.⁴⁴

Wherever she came from, Tole's name suggests that Orc, unlike some of the other Danes who settled in England, chose a wife from among his own people.⁴⁵ Another of Cnut's thegns, Thorkell of Harringworth, made the same choice, marrying a woman with the Scandianvian name Thorgund (ON Þorgunn).⁴⁶ Unlike Tole, Thorgund predeceased her husband, who on the eve of the Norman Conquest was holding an estate assessed at just over 59 hides, spread over Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire; in its description of Leighton Bromswold (Hunts.), Domesday Book calls him *Turchil danus*.⁴⁷ Part of his estate at Conington (Hunts.) was held as *lenland* of Thorney Abbey, and both he and his wife are commemorated in the Thorney *Liber Vitae*.⁴⁸ Later Thorney tradition remembered that after the Norman Conquest he returned to 'the Danes who were his kinsmen', whereupon King William gave his lands to Earl Waltheof.⁴⁹

Nationality was not the only thing which Thorkell and Thorgund had in common with Orc and Tole, for both couples were benefactors of the churches in the areas where they settled. While Thorkell and Thorgund endowed established communities, Orc and Tole founded (or perhaps re-founded) their own abbey. The lost cartulary of Abbotsbury claimed that its history went back to an original foundation 'in the very Infancy of christianity among the Britayns', which is not in itself implausible, though impossible to verify.⁵⁰ The place-name means 'abbot's *burh*' (the *burh* presumably being the

Iron Age hillfort above the existing village, now known as Abbotsbury Castle) and might imply that the estate (or part of it) had at one time been in ecclesiastical ownership; indeed the lost cartulary of Glastonbury Abbey contained a diploma of Edmund (939–46), granting 5 hides at *Abbedesburi* to his thegn Sigewulf, who (according to William of Malmesbury) used it to endow the church.⁵¹

No other trace survives of Glastonbury's interest, and if any part of the vill had ever belonged to the abbey, the whole was clearly in royal hands by the early eleventh century, when Cnut gave it to Orc. Abbotsbury was then a substantial estate, assessed (according to the partial transcript of Cnut's charter) at 17 hides, and might be expected to possess a church of some kind, but the statement (also derived from the lost cartulary) that Orc and Tole found only a single married priest suggests an estate-church (*tunkirke*) rather than a decayed minster.⁵² It is perhaps relevant that in 1086 a certain Bolli the priest held land from the abbey at Shilvinghampton and Atrim, the latter in company with a widow (*vidua*). It might not be too fanciful to see here the widow of Abbotsbury's single priest, holding in common with her husband's successor (perhaps her son).⁵³

Whatever kind of church existed before Orc's time, he and his wife were responsible for the Benedictine house, perhaps originally staffed by monks from nearby Cerne Abbas, which stood at Abbotsbury from the mid eleventh century to the Dissolution.⁵⁴ Domesday Book records an endowment of 84 hides and 1 virgate on the eve of the Norman Conquest, less than its neighbours at Milton and Cerne, both of which possessed over 120 hides, but much more than Horton's total endowment of only 10 hides.⁵⁵ Most of the abbey's land can be traced in the possession of Orc and Tole (see Table 10.1). The estates at Portesham and Abbotts Wootton are recorded in extant charters in their favour, and a further diploma concerning Hilton seems to have been included in the lost cartulary, while the fact that Tolpuddle preserves Tole's name suggests her possession of it at some

Table 10.1. *Lands of Orc and Abbotsbury, with total holdings in hides (h) and virgates (v) (* = Abbotsbury only)*

Abbotsbury Hundred	Puddletown Hundred	Whiteway Hundred	Beaminster Hundred	Whitchurch Hundred
Abbotsbury (including Rodden)	Tolpuddle	Hilton	Poorton*	Atrim*
Portesham	Little Cheselbourne*			Abbotts Wootton
Shilvinghampton*				
Waddon*				
Abbey: 41¼h	20h	18h	2v	4½h
Orc: 33h	18h	18h		2½h

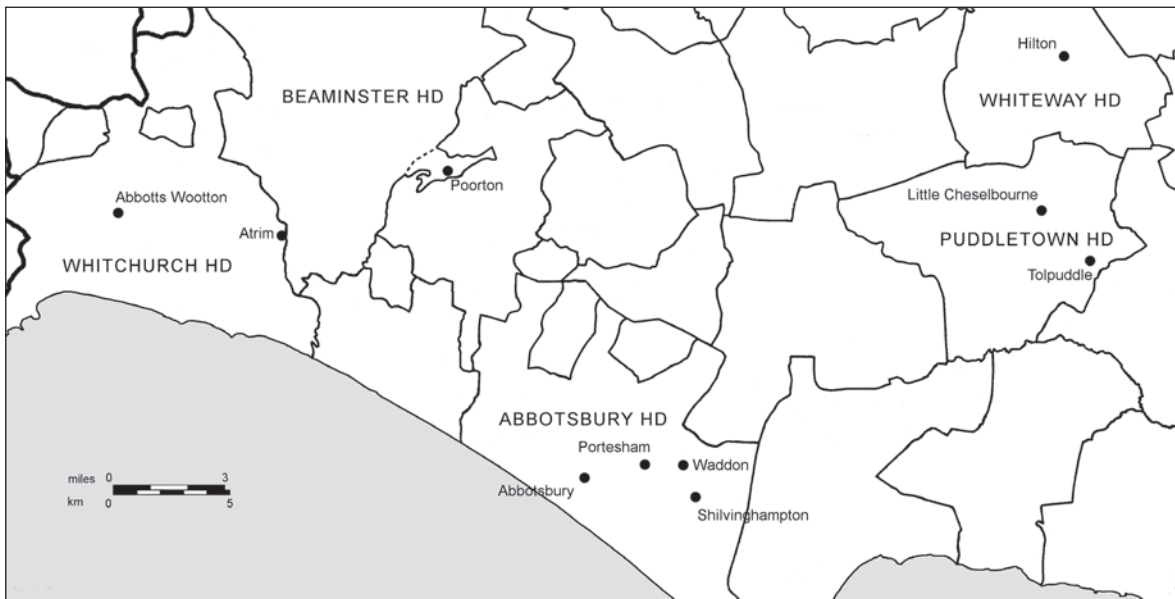


Figure 10.1. *Map of Lands of Orc and Abbotsbury, in their respective hundreds. (Map drawn by Ryan Lavelle with boundaries of the hundreds redrawn from the Alecto Domesday Map, with permission of Alecto Historical Editions; N.B. the eleventh-century names of the hundreds are uncertain, and do not necessarily follow those chosen in the Alecto edition.)*

time.⁵⁶ Abbotsbury itself was the largest manor, assessed at 22 hides. This presumably included both the 17 hides given by Cnut and the 5 hides at Rodden (in Abbotsbury) which, according to a diploma in the lost cartulary, were given by King Æthelred to his thegn *Sealwyne* in 1014.⁵⁷ Land at Rodden is also the subject of a surviving but fragmentary vernacular chirograph, whose import (so far as it can be reconstructed) is that a certain woman has ‘earned’ 4 hides at Rodden from

one Sæwine, perhaps the *Sealwyne* of Æthelred’s diploma, which have been granted to St Peter’s, Abbotsbury for the souls of two people, with the king’s consent. The attestation of Brihtwine, bishop of Sherborne from 1023 to 1045, places the transaction within the lifetimes of Orc and Tole, and, as Keynes puts it, ‘it would seem natural to suppose that the document is concerned with some part of their arrangements for the endowment of their newly founded monastery’.⁵⁸

The abbey also held 5 virgates at Shilvinghampton (Abbotsbury Hundred), half a hide in Poorton (Beaminster Hundred), and 2 hides at Atrim (Whitchurch Canonorum Hundred), which were still in the church's possession in 1086.⁵⁹ In addition, 6 hides at Waddon (Abbotsbury Hundred) and 2 hides at Little Cheselbourne (Puddletown Hundred) had come into the hands of Hugh fitzGrip, sheriff of Dorset, after 1066.⁶⁰ How much (if any) of this land had come from Orc and Tole it is impossible to say; the fact that a charter in favour of Bovi was included in the lost cartulary suggests that he too was a benefactor, though since all that remains is a fragment of the exemption clause, this is impossible to verify. A diploma of Edgar granting 3 *virgae* at (Little) Cheselbourne to his *fidelis* Wulfheard is extant among the single-sheet originals from the Abbotsbury archive, and the lost cartulary contained a diploma of Eadwig granting 2½ hides at Shilvinghampton to his thegn Ælfwine; both presumably served as the abbey's title-deeds to these lands, but how they had passed to the church is unknown.⁶¹ What is clear is that all Orc's own land had passed to his abbey: 17 hides at Abbotsbury itself, to which should probably be added the 4 hides at Rodden which were the subject of the damaged chirograph mentioned above; 12 hides at Portesham (Abbotsbury Hundred); 18 hides at Hilton (Whiteway Hundred); 18 hides at Tolpuddle (Puddletown Hundred); and 2½ hides at Abbotts Wootton (Whitchurch Canonorum Hundred). A holding of (at least) 71½ hides (see Table 10.1) would place Orc securely in the ranks of the *proceres*.⁶²

Orc not only established a monastery at Abbotsbury but also a guild to help in its support. Though references to guilds occur sporadically throughout the pre-Conquest period, only four documents regulating the affairs of specific institutions survive, all from the tenth and eleventh centuries; it is one of these, known as the Abbotsbury Guild Statutes, that records Orc's foundation.⁶³ Cast as a declaration (*geswutelunga*), it opens with a statement of intent:

Here is made known in this document that Urki has given the guildhall [*gegyldehalle*] and the site at Abbotsbury to the praise of God and St Peter and for the guildship [*gyldscipe*] to own in his lifetime and after it, in lasting memory of himself and his wife.

A sanction follows, and then a section establishing 'the agreement which Orc and the guild-brothers at Abbotsbury have decided upon' (*þa forword þe Orecy and þa gegyldan at Abbodesbyrig gecoren habbað*), beginning with the religious purposes, associated with the celebration of the feast of St Peter ad Vincula (1 August, or Lammas). Three nights before the feast, each guild-member (*gegylða*) must contribute 'a penny or a pennyworth of wax, as required, to the minster', and on the eve each pair of guild-members must give a broad loaf of good quality, with the appropriate accompaniments (*gesuful*) 'for our common almsgiving'. Lights for the church and alms for the poor having been provided for, the regulations pass on to fuel and provender for the feast itself. Five weeks before the feast, each member shall contribute a guild-sester of pure wheat, and anyone who has not paid up within two days shall be fined his entrance fee (3 sesters of wheat); three days later, each full member (*riht gegylða*) shall contribute a burden of wood, and those who are not full members (*ungylðan*) two burdens of wood or a sester of corn. Moreover, 'whoever undertakes a brewing and does not do it properly' is liable to the full entrance fee, without remission.

The next section of the regulations is concerned with behaviour within the guild. Whoever insults a guild-member inside the guild shall forfeit his entrance fee and make amends to his victim; if he will not pay compensation, he is to forfeit the fellowship (*geferræden*) and all other guild privileges. Non-members were permitted to attend, but notice was required, for anyone who brought more men than he should 'without the permission of the steward and the purveyors' (*buton ðæs stierdes leafa and ðæra feormera*) was to forfeit his entrance fee.

The last section of the regulations concerns the duties of guild-members to their deceased brethren.

On the death of a member, each is to pay a penny at the corpse-side for the soul of the deceased, or with a fine of triple that amount if he defaults. If a guild-member falls ill within 60 miles, fifteen men are to be found (thirty if he had actually died) to fetch him to the place which he had selected in life (presumably for his burial). If, however, he dies in the neighbourhood, the steward is to be told the place where the body should be taken, and is to contact as many of the members as he can reach, for them to come to the place where their *gegylða* has died, and bring his body to the minster and pray for his soul. These instructions are followed by the words 'that will rightly be called a guildship (*gyldræden*), which we thus do'. A prayer to God and St Peter 'for love of whom we have gathered this guild' (*forðan ðe we for his lufon þis gegyld gegaderodon*) concludes the tract.

Orc's guild is typical of others known from tenth- and eleventh-century England: an association with pious intentions, which also provided for the welfare of its members.⁶⁴ Most early guilds, like the 'Thegns' Guild of Cambridge and the pre-Conquest guild at Exeter, both of whose statutes are extant, are associated with towns.⁶⁵ Both probably date from the tenth century, but some guilds go back even earlier; the *cnihtengild* of Canterbury is first recorded in the ninth century, though no statutes survive.⁶⁶ Domesday Book records that the burgesses of Canterbury held land and a guildhall in the city on the eve of the Norman Conquest; whether these burgesses are the successors of the ninth-century *cnihtengild* is unclear, but they may be the forerunners of the merchant guild (*ceapmannagild*) which appears in the 1070s.⁶⁷ Similar associations seem to have existed at Dover, which had a guildhall with associated land in King Edward's day, and at Winchester, where two 'halls of the cnihts' (*chenictehallas*) are recorded at the same date.⁶⁸ Nothing is known of the functions and purposes of either association, though the statement that the cnihts of Winchester 'drank their guild' (*potabant gildam suam*) at one of the halls suggests a convivial gathering like that of the

Abbotsbury brethren.⁶⁹ The London *cnihtengild*, first mentioned in the early twelfth century but perhaps originating in the tenth, may have had some responsibility for the defence of the city.⁷⁰

The association of guilds and towns may simply reflect the distribution of the surviving sources. There was nothing 'urban' about eleventh-century Abbotsbury, and Bedwyn, for which a fragmentary set of guild-statutes survives, was a royal manor, though one which possessed twenty-five burgesses in 1086.⁷¹ Two guilds connected with the vill of Woodbury in Devon are recorded in the immediate aftermath of the Norman Conquest, as are lists of members belonging to twelve other guilds throughout the same county, all of them rural associations, though closely connected with St Peter's, Exeter.⁷²

Such rural guilds may have been quite common in pre-Conquest England. In the tale of the eleventh-century hero, Eadric the wild, related by Walter Map a century later, the protagonist meets his fairy bride in 'a large building at the edge of the forest, such a one as the English have as drinking-houses, one in each diocese, called in English *ghildhus*'.⁷³ The Wantage Code established fines for breach of the peace in an *ealahuse*, and though the context suggests an urban rather than a rural setting, the local ale-house was the obvious place for meetings of all kinds.⁷⁴ The connection between guilds and drink was long-standing; indeed the word *gild* and its variants could be used 'to describe a feast or *libatio* of a more or less religious character' as well as 'the association of people who celebrated it'.⁷⁵ The village 'drinking-house' (*domus potationis*) where (according to Walter's contemporary, William of Newburgh) a psychic countryman (*rusticanus*) saw the devils perched upon the cups of the drinkers fly off when the customary prayers were said, may have been a rural equivalent of the hall where the Winchester cnihts drank their guild.⁷⁶

The guilds were not, however, merely occasions for conviviality. Both the Exeter and Bedwyn statutes lay down the number of masses which

each member shall obtain on the death of a fellow, and the Bedwyn statutes specify the contributions to be rendered for the funeral feast. Arrangements to collect and honour the bodies of those who have died are common to the Abbotsbury and Cambridge guilds, and the Exeter guild requires members to assist those of their number who undertake the pilgrimage to Rome.⁷⁷ Mutual aid is also illustrated by the requirement, found in both the Exeter and the Bedwyn statutes, that members shall assist fellows whose houses have been destroyed by fire.

Associations of individuals not related to each other by blood could also undertake some of the responsibilities usually provided by kinsmen; Alfred's code allows for a kinless man who is involved in manslaughter to call upon his *gegyldan* for help in paying wergeld.⁷⁸ The same concern is expressed by the 'Thegns' Guild at Cambridge, whose members contributed to the wergeld of anyone slain by one of their number 'as an avenger by necessity and to remedy the insult to him'; if the guild-brother had killed 'foolishly or wantonly', however, he bore the consequences on his own. If one of their members was himself killed, the guild not only demanded a payment of £8, but also undertook to bear the feud if it was necessary to avenge him.⁷⁹

Substitute families were particularly necessary for those who, like merchants and traders, had cause to travel outside their networks of kindred and friends. Some of the Scandinavian runestones of the tenth and eleventh century commemorate such relationships in memorials to men described as *felagi* and *gildi*. The word *felagi* 'appears to suggest trade or at least some activity based on common property', though in runic inscriptions the partnership involved is usually associated with warfare.⁸⁰ The term *gildi* is found in only four runic inscriptions, all from Sweden, 'all remarkable in that they are commissioned by (probably) unrelated groups of men'.⁸¹ Two of the surviving stones are from the trading settlement of Sigtuna and were raised by the *Frisa gildar*

(guild-brothers of the Frisians), but whether this indicates a group of Frisian traders, or Swedish traders engaged in trade with Frisians, or whether they were traders at all is unclear.⁸² A third stone, from Bjälbo (Östergötland), was raised by a group of drengs for their *gildi* Greipr.⁸³ The word *drengr*, meaning a (young) warrior, was also used as a personal name: at Törnevalla (also Östergötland) a now unidentifiable group raised a stone for their *gildi* Drengr. It is decorated with a finely drawn ship, but whether this signifies a trading-vessel or a warship is unclear (it could of course be both).⁸⁴ The import of these stones is that 'the Viking Age guilds were like their medieval successors in being organisations for the mutual assistance of their members, whether these were traders or not'.⁸⁵ Orc could thus have been familiar with such associations before his arrival in England.

No less than traders, itinerant warriors and stipendiaries needed substitute kinsmen. Most of them, like Orc, would have been retainers (*huskarlar*) in the following of a lord, whose protection would cover most eventualities. When borrowed into English, the word 'housecarl' is especially connected with the household of the king, though he was not the only lord to have housecarls.⁸⁶ No-one now believes that Cnut's *huskarlar*, let alone Edward the Confessor's housecarls, were organized into a military guild with their own court and written rules of conduct; if (as seems likely) they had a group identity, it was little different from that which bound other royal and aristocratic households of the tenth and eleventh centuries.⁸⁷ It remains true, however, that like other members of the king's household, housecarls could undertake administrative tasks; two of Harthacnut's housecarls were killed while attempting to collect heregeld in Worcester in 1041.⁸⁸ Guilds could also be used for the implementation of the king's wishes, like the tenth-century London peace-guild (*friðgegyldom*), established by the bishops and reeves of the region to enforce the laws of King Æthelstan.⁸⁹

It would not, therefore, be surprising if one of the purposes of Orc's guild at Abbotsbury was

'to bind in loyalty to himself the free men of the locality into which he had been intruded' by his lord the king.⁹⁰ Even if such a political and public purpose underlay his actions, Orc was nevertheless behaving like any other landowner, whether a native Englishman or a newcomer from overseas, in establishing a guildship to support his abbey. In this, as in other aspects, his career illustrates not merely the Danish settlement of the kingdom after Cnut's conquest, but also the assimilation of that settlement into the pattern of English politics and society.

Notes

1. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1004, included among the 'apparently original diplomas' of the Confessor by Simon Keynes, 'Regenbald the Chancellor (*sic*)', *ANS* 10 (1987), pp. 185–222, at p. 213, n. 167. The spelling of Orc's name is something of a problem. *Orc[y]* is the form used in the texts of this and other Latin diplomas in his favour (see nn. 4 and 5, below) while the Confessor's vernacular writ (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1063) uses *Urk*, but the distinction is not one of language (Latin versus the vernacular), for *Urk[i]* appears in the witness-lists of the Latin diplomas he attests (see nn. 7 and 8, below), while a post-Conquest vernacular writ confirming the rights of Abbotsbury Abbey uses the form *Orc*: see D. Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum: the Acta of William I (1066–1087)* (Oxford, 1998), no. 1, pp. 111–12. He also appears as *Orecy* in the vernacular Abbotsbury guild-statutes (see above, pp. 163–64). A choice must be made, and in what follows I shall call our protagonist 'Orc'.
2. *GDB* fol. 30r. See K. S. B. Keats-Rohan and D. E. Thornton, *Domesday Names* (Woodbridge, 1997), p. 142 (*Orcus*); the variant form *Urk[i]* does not appear in Domesday at all. The only references to *Orc/Urk[i]* in the *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England* <<http://www.pase.ac.uk>> (accessed Jul. 2011) are among those included in this paper; all relate to Orc of Abbotsbury, apart from the reference to the Domesday tenant.
3. G. Fellows-Jensen, *The Vikings and their Victims: the Evidence of the Names*, The Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies, University College London, 21 February 1994 (London, 1995), pp. 6–7. The Orkney isles were known to the Irish as *Innsi Orc*: 'islands of the pigs', transmuted by the Scandinavian settlers into *Orkneyjar*: 'seal islands' (from ON *orkn*, 'grey seal'): see B. Sandness, 'Some Orkney Place-Names: *Maeshowe*, *Orkney* and *Brodgar*', at <<http://www.nordic.uhi.ac.uk/?q=node/65>> (accessed Apr. 2011). Since the island group appears in Ptolemy's map as *Orchades*, the term 'orc' may be Pictish in origin: B. Sandness, 'Linguistic patterns in the place-names of Norway and the Northern Isles', in *Northern Lights, Northern Words. Selected Papers from the FRSLI Conference, Kirkwall 2009*, ed. R. McColl Millar, Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ireland, 3–14 (Aberdeen, 2010), pp. 8–9.
4. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 961.
5. S. D. Keynes, 'The Lost Cartulary of Abbotsbury', *ASE* 18 (1989), pp. 207–43.
6. Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 229–31.
7. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 969 and 975: *Charters of Sherborne*, ed. M. A. O'Donovan, Anglo-Saxon Charters 3 (Oxford, 1988), nos 16 and 20.
8. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 993, 999, and 1010. For the authenticity of no. 993, see *Charters of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters 7–8 (Oxford, 2 parts, 2000–1), Part 2, no. 141, pp. 549–53: 'there seems to be a good chance that it is at least based on a contemporary diploma'.
9. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 1063–4; see *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, ed. F. E. Harmer (Stamford, 2nd edn, 1989), nos 1–2, pp. 119–22. Orc's writ is addressed to Earl Harold and Bishop Ælfwold (of Sherborne), so it must post-date the death of Earl Godwine in 1053 and pre-date that of Ælfwold in 1058. For Tole's writ, see further above, pp. 162–63.
10. Dorset County Record Office, Fox-Strangways (Ilchester) Archive, D 124. Five single-sheet originals survive, three Latin diplomas, two in Orc's favour (Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 736, 961, and 1004), the Abbotsbury Guild Statutes, for which see further below, and a damaged chirograph in OE (Keynes, 'Lost cartulary', pp. 229–8). Facsimiles are published in *Facsimiles of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, ed. W. B. Sanders (Southampton, 3 vols, 1978–84) [hereafter *O.S. Facs*], Vol. 2, Ilchester 1–5.
11. Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', p. 232; for the 1033 diploma for Horton, see n. 6, above.
12. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1063, Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, no. 1; Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 969, O'Donovan, *Charters of Sherborne*, no. 20.
13. F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066–1166* (Oxford, 1932), pp. 119–20; *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 3rd edn, 1971), pp. 413–14. A considerable body of scholarship has developed on the Scandinavian settlement of the

- eleventh century: see Fellows-Jensen, *Vikings and their Victims*, and 'Danish Names in England', in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. R. Rumble (London, 1994), pp. 123–40; J. Insley, 'Regional Variation in Scandinavian Personal Nomenclature in England', *Nomina* 3 (1979), pp. 52–60; S. Keynes, 'Cnut's Earls', in *Reign of Cnut*, ed. Rumble, pp. 43–88; K. Mack, 'Changing Thegns: Cnut's Conquest and the English Aristocracy', *Albion* 16 (1984), pp. 375–87. See also the articles in n. 14, below. For the creation of an Anglo-Scandinavian élite and its cross-North Sea connections, see T. Bolton, 'English Political Refugees at the Court of Sveinn Estrithson, King of Denmark (1042–76)', *Medieval Scandinavia* 15 (2005), pp. 17–36; I have to thank Dr Bolton for a copy of this paper.
14. For the western districts, see J. Insley, 'Some Scandinavian Personal Names from South-west England', *Namn och Bygd* 70 (1982), pp. 77–93; 'Some Scandinavian Names from South-west England from Post-Conquest Evidence', *Studia Anthroponymica Scandinavica* 3 (1985), pp. 23–58; 'A Scandinavian Personal Name in Wales', in *Names, Places and People: an Onomastic Miscellany in Memory of John McNeal Dodgson*, ed. A. R. Rumble and A. D. Mills (Stamford, 1997), pp. 182–85; A. Williams, "'Cockles Amongst the Wheat": Danes and English in the West Midlands in the First Half of the Eleventh Century', *Midland History* 11 (1986), pp. 1–22.
 15. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 955; *Charters of Shaftesbury Abbey*, ed. S. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters 5 (Oxford, 1996), pp. 122–27. The land later came into the hands of Shaftesbury Abbey, though it was in dispute in the later years of King Edward's reign (*GDB* fol. 78v.).
 16. Bovi's attestation is fifth among seven *ministri* with Scandinavian names, of whom the only one who can be identified is *Kaerl*, presumably 'Karl the king's *cniht*' who attested a Kentish marriage agreement between 1016 and 1022 (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1461), and whose sons Godwine and Godric were holding land in Kent on the eve of the Norman Conquest; see A. Williams, *The World Before Domesday: the English Aristocracy, 900–1066* (London, 2008), pp. 50–51 and 53. Aghmundr also attests two spurious diplomas in favour of Christchurch, Canterbury (Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 959 and 981).
 17. Shaftesbury paid 2 marks of silver, Dorchester and Wareham a mark each, and Bridport half a mark (*GDB* fol. 75).
 18. There may have been a garrison at Winchester, for Emma was staying there 'with the housecarls of her son, the king' during the disputed succession after Cnut's death (*ASC* E 1035). See also the 15 acres at Wallingford, 'where the housecarls used to dwell' (*GDB* fol. 56r.).
 19. Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 231–32. Bovi's diploma for Horton survived at Sherborne, with other documentation relating to the abbey; Aghmundr's diploma for Cheselbourne went, along with the land, to Shaftesbury Abbey.
 20. A. Williams, 'The Domesday Survey', in *VCH: Dors.* 3, pp. 1–60, at pp. 33–34, where some of the names listed may not be (as asserted) 'of Scandinavian derivation'; *Bruno*, who held 7 hides at Weston in parage with Godric (*GDB* fol. 79r.), is probably continental Germanic, while *Turmund*, who held 4½ hides at an unidentified *Wintreburne* (*GDB* fol. 77r.) could be a hybrid of ON *Thor* plus OE *-mund*. The name of the eponymous *Her* who held two-thirds of a hide at Herston (*GDB* fol. 82v) may be connected with OE *here*; he was perhaps the father of Godfrey *scutularius*, a king's sergeant in 1086 with another tenement in Herston previously held by his anonymous father (*GDB* fol. 85r., Williams, 'Domesday Survey', p. 33).
 21. *GDB* fol. 80v. There are various textual problems which affect the reading of this entry, for which see *DB: Dorset* 34:8 note.
 22. *GDB* fol. 84r. and see n. 54, below.
 23. *GDB* fol. 84r.
 24. *GDB* fols 82v. and 220r. (*Bern*), 344v. (*Barne*); *LDB* fols 222v. (*Bern*), 373r. (*Beornus/beorus*); there is a *Ber* in Yorkshire (*GDB* fol. 322v.), and a *Bere* in Devon (*GDB* fol. 117v.), while the name *Bar* occurs in Suffolk and Yorkshire (*LDB* fol. 294v.; *GDB* fol. 373r.). See Keats-Rohan and Thornton, *Domesday Names*, pp. 35–36.
 25. *GDB* fols 83r. and 85r.; P. A. Clarke, *The English Nobility under Edward the Confessor* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 266–7. The name is commonest in East Anglia.
 26. *GDB* fols 79v. and 84v. Neither of the Dorset holders (if there were two) is likely to be identical with Ascell of Ware, who held a substantial estate in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, and who appears both as *Anschil* (*GDB* fols 133v., 138r., 138v., 141r., 141v., 212v., and 218 bis) and as *Aschil* (*GDB* fols 133v., 139r., 211v., 212v., and 213r.). In the entry for Colmworth (Beds.), he appears as *Achi*, which should represent ON *Aki*, but this is presumably scribal error.
 27. Fellows-Jensen, 'Danish Names in England', pp.

- 135–37. Names ending in *-ketil* (OE *-cytel*) were, by the eleventh century, virtually confined to East Anglia. The uncompounded name ‘Ketil’, anglicised as ‘Cytel’, is discussed in C. P. Lewis, ‘Danish Landholders in Wessex in 1066’, below, p. 174.
28. *GDB* fols 83r. and 84v. *bis*. However, cf. Lewis, ‘Danish Landowners’, below, pp. 180–82.
 29. *GDB* fols 74r., 84r., and 84v. *bis*.
 30. Ailwood (*GDB* fol. 84v.) was assessed at 5 hides; Milborne (Stileham) is not assessed for geld, but Winterbourne (Houghton) was assessed at 10 hides and Plumber at 5 (*GDB* fols 84r. and 84v.), while Stapleford (Wilts.) was assessed at 10½ hides (*GDB* fol. 74r.). John Palmer identifies the *tainus regis* of Wiltshire and Dorset with Swein of Essex, son of Robert fitzWymarc. J. Palmer *et al.*, *Electronic Edition of Domesday Book: Translation, Databases and Scholarly Commentary*, 1086, UK Data Archive (Colchester, 2007).
 31. Williams, ‘Domesday Survey’, pp. 34 and 52. The Northamptonshire Swein and his father Azur are probably the antecessors of Gunfrid de Chocques in Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire (*GDB* fols 152v. and 227v.), in which case they held in all some 22½ hides of land. Another Swein son of Azor, who owed 20s to the Worcester relief of 1095 (for which see J. H. Round, *Feudal England* (London, 2nd edn, 1964), p. 244), was probably the son of Azur, kinsman and chamberlain of Bishop Brihteah (for whom see A. Williams, ‘An Introduction to the Worcestershire Domesday’, in *The Worcestershire Domesday*, ed. A. Williams and R. W. H. Erskine (London, 1988), pp. 1–31, at pp. 25–26).
 32. *GDB* fols 47r., 71v., 80v., 82r., and 111v.; he is probably the *Teolf* who shared 8½ hides at Tickenham (Somerset) with *Saulf*, which passed to William de Eu (*GDB* fol. 96v. and see next note). A *Toli* held 5 hides at Shepton Montague (also Somerset), which passed to the count of Mortain (*GDB* fol. 92v., and see Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 350).
 33. Lewis, ‘Danish Landowners in Wessex’, pp. 198–202. For *Toxos*, see above, n. 21. Dr Lewis further suggests that the name of *Coolf*, whose manor of 2 hides in Rowditch Hundred (New Forest) passed to William de Eu, is scribal error for *Toolf* (Tholf); *Coolf* also held 2 hides of land at Wellow on the Isle of Wight which had passed to the king (*GDB* fols 51r. and 52r.). Whether Tholf should also be identified with *Codolf*, whose 7 hides at South Tidmouth (Hants) passed to Robert fitzGerald is uncertain (*GDB* fol. 46v.).
 34. The total includes the lands of *Coolf* in the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, but not that of *Codulf* (see previous note); a notional figure of 4 hides 1 virgate has been included for Tholf’s share of Tickenham (Som.), but not the 5 hides at Shepton Montague (see n. 32, above). For the status of *procer*, see Williams, *World Before Domesday*, pp. 4–5.
 35. *GDB* fol. 47r.. For a possible connection between Tholf and Orc, see n. 90, below.
 36. *GDB* fols 82v., 98r. and 170r.; Exon 450b.
 37. *GDB* fol. 89v.; here the byname is in Domesday Book itself. In Devon, 1¾ hides at North Bovey and 2 hides at Thurlestone were held by Judichael of Totnes in succession to John (*GDB* fol. 109r.), who may or may not be identical with Matthew de Mortagne’s antecessor. For John the Dane and his family, see further Lewis, ‘Danish Landowners in Wessex’, below, pp. 202–203.
 38. D. Pelteret, *Catalogue of English Post-Conquest Vernacular Documents* (Woodbridge, 1990), no. 56, p. 83; S. Keynes, ‘Giso, Bishop of Wells’, *ANS* 19 (1996), pp. 203–71, at pp. 243–47 and 259.
 39. Milborne was assessed at 5 hides and Owermoigne at 10 hides less 1 virgate (*GDB* fol. 82v.), Clevedon (Som.) at 5½ hides and 2 furlongs (*GDB* fol. 98r., Exon 450a1.), and Shipton Moyne (Glos.) at 10 hides (*GDB* fol. 170r.); Yatton (Som.) was assessed at 20 hides (*GDB* fol. 89v.). See further Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 318, who notes that two other predecessors of Matthew de Mortagne, Strang in Gloucestershire and Thorkell in Somerset, were also styled *danus*; possibly the three were kinsmen.
 40. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1064; Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, no. 2, for which see also n. 9, above.
 41. *GDB* fol. 78v. and see n.1, above. For the grant to Tole see Keynes, ‘Lost Cartulary’, pp. 232–33; the transcript is incomplete and the date is omitted.
 42. For Orc’s writ (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1063), see n. 9, above.
 43. W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum Vol. 1* (London, 1655), p. 276; Keynes, ‘Lost Cartulary’, p. 236 and n.
 44. *Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesie Wigornensis*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 2 vols, 1723), Vol. 1, pp. 253–54.
 45. By contrast, the Herefordshire landowner Thorkell the white had a wife with the English name of Leofflæd (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1452), while another Thorkell and his wife Æthelgyth gave land to Bury St Edmunds (Suffolk) on the eve of the Norman Conquest (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1529). For these and similar marriages, see Fellows-Jensen, *Vikings and their Victims*, pp. 12–13. Since the sons of Karl

- the king's *cniht*, who attested a Kentish marriage-agreement in the early years of Cnut's reign, were called Godwine and Godric (see n. 16, above), their mother, too, is likely to have been English.
46. The twelfth-century *Liber Benefactorum* of Ramsey Abbey contains a Latin translation of Thorgund's will, granting land at Sawtry (Hunts.) to Ramsey, with the assent of her husband, who is said to have honoured the gift after her death; see *Chronicon Abbatiae Rameseiensis*, ed. W. Dunn Macray, RS 83 (London, 1886), pp. 175–76. In the twelfth century, a religious house was established at Sawtry by Earl Simon II de St Liz, and an inquiry made at his command into the rights of that house in Whittlesey Mere reveals that a partition was made *per regem Cnud a Turkillo Daney*s who, with his wife *Huregundae*, had held an estate at Sawtry; see *Cartularium Monasterium de Rameseia*, ed. W. H. Hart and P. A. Lyons, RS 79 (London, 3 vols, 1873–93), Vol. 1, pp. 161 and 163–64.
 47. *GDB* fols 203*v.*, 206*v.*, 208*v.*, 228*r.*, 228*v.*, 229*r.*, and 236*v.*; in all cases the lands passed to Countess Judith or, in the case of Leighton Bromswold (fol. 203*v.*), to Lincoln Cathedral via the countess's husband Earl Waltheof, to whom King William had given Thorkell's confiscated lands (see n. 49, below). Clarke (*English Nobility*, pp. 346–47) does not include Leighton Bromswold among Thorkell's lands. He does include Hollingdon (Bucks.) but the Thorkell who held this tenement before the Conquest was still in possession, as the countess's tenant, in 1086 (*GDB* fol. 152*v.*). Thorkell of Harringworth may also be the *Turchil* who held several estates in Lincolnshire, close to those of Hereward himself (see n. 49, below).
 48. D. Whitelock, 'Scandinavian Personal names in the *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society* 12 (1940), pp. 140–41.
 49. C. R. Hart, *Early Charters of Eastern England* (Leicester, 1975), pp. 236–7. Since Waltheof made his peace with the Conqueror in 1070, Dr Hart suggests that Thorkell of Harringworth was involved in the revolt of Hereward in 1069–70, and returned to Denmark when the Danish fleet withdrew; he must have been an old man by that time, but the chronology is not impossible.
 50. Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', p. 222, citing Thomas Gerard's notes in J. Coker, *Survey of Dorsetshire* (London, 1732).
 51. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1727; Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 207–208; WM, *De ant. Glas*, pp. 116 and p. 142. See also L. Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury: Church and Endowment* (Woodbridge, 1996), pp. 44–45.
 52. Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', p. 236.
 53. *GDB*, fol. 78*v.* The information that Bolli was a priest comes from Exon 39b2 and 40a1. He might be identical with Bolli the priest who in 1086 held the churches of the royal manors of Winfrith Newburgh, Puddletown, Chaldon and Fleet as a king's almsman, and Mappowder as a *tainus regis*; he had held Mappowder himself TRE with *alii vii liberis tainis* (*GDB* fols 79*r.* and 84*r.*, and see above).
 54. *Æsuuerdus*, who occurs c.1075, is the first recorded abbot, but nothing is known of him (D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, V. C. M. London (eds), *The Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales, 940–1216* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 23). All that now remains is the tithe-barn and the gable end of what may have been the abbot's house, both dating from long after Orc's time. For a survey of the abbey's history, see *VCH: Dors.* 2, pp. 48–49.
 55. Williams, 'Domesday Survey', pp. 42 and 43–44. The endowment of Abbotsbury is there given as 75 hides (*recte* 76¼), but this omits the 6 hides at Waddon and 2 hides at Little Cheselbourne which had been abstracted by Hugh fitzGrip, sheriff of Dorset (*GDB* fols 79*r.* and 83*v.*).
 56. For Hilton, see Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 222–23 and 236.
 57. Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 227–28. One hide at Abbotsbury had been abstracted after the Conquest by Hugh fitzGrip (*GDB* fol. 78*r.*).
 58. *O.S. Facs* Vol. 2, Ilchester 5, printed and discussed in Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 228–29, quotation on p. 229. *Sealwyne* is not a very credible corruption of Sæwine, but stranger things have happened.
 59. *GDB* fols 78*r.*–78*v.*
 60. Hugh had given the land at Waddon to the abbey of Montevilliers, but the three thegns who held it in King Edward's day had rendered harvest dues and churchscot to Abbotsbury as customary dues (*GDB* fol. 79*r.*), while Hugh's widow retained 2 hides in Little Cheselbourne held by Algar and Alstan in King Edward's day; Hugh's men claimed that Hugh had held it of Abbotsbury, but the abbot denied this (*GDB* fol. 83*v.*).
 61. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 736; *OS Facs* Vol. 2, Ilchester 1; Keynes, 'Lost Cartulary', pp. 225–26, and see pp. 209 and 220.
 62. Clarke (*English Nobility*, p. 3) values his estate at £60, well above the £40 necessary for the status of a senior thegn, but, since he died before 1066, does

- not include him in his tables of major lay landowners on the eve of the Conquest.
63. *O.S. Facs* Vol. 2, Ilchester 4 (facsimile, Old English text and translation); *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, ed. J. M. Kemble (London, 6 vols, 1839–48), Vol. 4, pp. 277–79 (OE text); *Diplomatarium Anglicum Aevi Saxonici*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 1865), pp. 605–8 (OE text and modern translation); *EHD* 1, no. 139 (translation only).
 64. G. Rosser, 'The Anglo-Saxon Gilds', in *Minsters and Parish Churches: the Local Church in Transition*, ed. J. Blair, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph 17 (Oxford, 1988), pp. 31–34. For the wider European picture, see S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 67–87.
 65. The regulations of the Thegns' Guild, Cambridge, and the Exeter Guild Statutes are printed, with modern translations, in *Diplomatarium Anglicum Aevi Saxonici*, ed. Thorpe, pp. 610–13 and 613–14; see also *EHD* 1, nos. 136–37 (translation only).
 66. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1199, a private Kentish charter from the reign of King Æthelberht (858–66), is attested by the *cniabta gegildan* of Canterbury.
 67. *GDB* fols 1r. and 2r.; W. Urry, *Canterbury under the Angevin Kings* (London, 1967), pp. 124–31, and 385.
 68. *GDB* fols 1r. and 11v.; 'The Winton Domesday', ed. and trans. F. Barlow, in *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, ed. M. Biddle, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford, 1976), pp. 34–35 and 39 (Survey I, nos. 10 and 34).
 69. 'Winton Domesday', I, no. 10. This *chenictehall* may have become the later Chapman's Hall, though there is no direct connection between the *cnihts* and the later merchants (M. Biddle and D. J. Keene, 'Winchester in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', in *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Biddle, pp. 335–36).
 70. J. Haslam, 'Parishes, Churches, Wards and Gates in Eastern London', in *Minsters and Parish Churches*, ed. Blair, pp. 35–43.
 71. *GDB* fol. 64v.; for the incomplete Bedwyn Guild Statutes, see *EHD* 1, no. 138.
 72. Thorpe, *Diplomatarium*, pp. 608–10; the lists seem to date from the late eleventh century, see D. Probert, 'A Community of Names in Post-Conquest Exeter', paper delivered at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds, 2010, available at <<http://kcl.academia.edu/DuncanProbert>> (accessed 30 Dec. 2012). Virtually all the members of the Devon guilds (including those at Woodbury) bear OE names, which suggests that they originated before the Norman Conquest.
 73. Walter Map's 'De Nugis Curialium', trans. M. R. James (London, 1923), p. 82. The meaning of the phrase *in singulis diocesisibus* is uncertain, but could mean a smaller area than an episcopal see (see Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, p. 76).
 74. III Æthelred, clause 1.2, in *The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I*, ed. A. J. Robertson (Cambridge, 1925), pp. 64–65. The Wantage Code was concerned specifically with the Danelaw.
 75. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, p. 67; for Scandinavia, see J. Jesch, *Ships and Men in the Viking Age: the Vocabulary of Runic Inscriptions and Skaldic Verse* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 239–41.
 76. William of Newburgh, *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, RS 82 (London, 2 vols, 1884–9), Vol. 1, pp. 151–54.
 77. A fragmentary will from Bury St Edmunds, post-Conquest in its present form, makes detailed provision for the funeral feast of the testator (*Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. A. J. Robertson (Cambridge, 2nd edn, 1956), pp. 252–53).
 78. Alfred, clause 30; if a kinless man should be killed, half his wergeld goes to his *gegyltan* and half to the king (*The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, ed. F. L. Attenborough (Cambridge, 1925), pp. 76–77). See also Ine, clause 16 (ed. Attenborough, pp. 40–41), which prohibits the *gegildan* of a slain thief from proceeding to the oath.
 79. *EHD* 1, no. 136.
 80. Jesch, *Ships and Men*, p. 232. See also B. Sawyer, *The Viking-Age Rune-Stones: Custom and Commemoration in Early Medieval Scandinavia* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 62–63 and 116–19, and S. Roffey and R. Lavelle, 'West Saxons and Danes: Negotiating Identities in the Early Middle Ages', above, pp. 20–21.
 81. Jesch, *Ships and Men*, p. 239.
 82. The runes on both Sigtuna stones (U 379, 391) were cut by Torbjorn, who also cut U 405; Sawyer, *Viking-Age Rune-Stones*, p. 244; R. I. Page, *Chronicles of the Vikings: Records, Memorials and Myths* (London: British Museum Press, 1995), p. 171 (Details of runic inscriptions, with translations, can be accessed via Rundata 2.5 for Windows, Uppsala Universitet, *Samnordisk runtextdatabas (Scandinavian runic-text database)*, <<http://www.nordiska.uu.se/forskn/samnord.htm>>).
 83. Ög 64, illustrated in Sawyer, *Viking-Age Rune-Stones*, p. 104, plate 23.
 84. Ög MÖLM1960: 230=N 19 (see Sawyer, *Viking-*

Age Rune-Stones, p. 232 and n. 26); Jesch, *Ships and Men*, pp. 239–41; Sawyer, *Viking-Age Rune-Stones*, pp. 103–107.

85. Jesch, *Ships and Men*, p. 241.
86. For Earl Siward's housecarls, see *ASC* D 1054; for those of Earl Leofric, Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1425.
87. N. Hooper, 'The Housecarls in the Eleventh Century', *ANS* 7 (1984), pp. 161–76.
88. *ASC* CD 1041.
89. 'VI Athelstan', in *Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, ed. Attenborough, pp. 156–69 (also trans. *EHD* 1, no. 37).
90. Rosser, 'Anglo-Saxon Gilds', p. 32. We do not, of course, know the names of any members of the guild save Orc and Tole. Other landholders in the hundred of Abbotsbury include Tholf the Dane (for whom see above), who held land at Swyre (*GDB* fol. 80v.), and Brihtwine the reeve, who still held his land at

Chilcombe in 1086 as a king's thegn; before 1066 he had held just over 17 hides in Dorset, and may be the man who held (and continued to hold) 4 hides of the abbey of Cerne at Cerne Abbas (*GDB* fols 77v., 84r., and 84v.; Williams, 'Domesday Survey', pp. 51–52; he is called *prepositus* in the Dorset Geld Rolls). The Æthelmær who held lands at Powerstock and Wraxall in the neighbouring hundred of Eggardon (*GDB* fol. 82v) was, with his putative brother Æthelfrith, one of the antecessors of Robert Arundel in Dorset and Somerset, and both of them were wealthy enough to qualify as *proceres* (Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 234–35; Williams, 'Domesday Survey', pp. 31 and 34). One could continue this exercise through all the neighbouring Dorset hundreds, but the results are no more than speculative.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Danish Landowners in Wessex in 1066

C. P. Lewis

No one has ever thought that the Danish conquest of England in 1016 had such far-reaching effects as those after the Normans arrived fifty years later. There were new men at the top, of course, but no transformation took place in the personnel, structure, or character of landed society as a whole to compare with the changes wrought after 1066. One whole category of evidence that might indicate the taking of land by Cnut's Danes, however, has been almost entirely neglected: the significant numbers of Danish personal names among the landowners recorded in Domesday Book for 1066 in Wessex and other regions beyond the Danelaw: those parts of England which had no Viking settlement in the later ninth century and continued to stand apart from the Anglo-Scandinavian cultural traditions of the Danelaw in the eleventh.¹ Put simply, why did mid eleventh-century Wessex have scores of landowners with Danish names, and can they tell us anything about the arrival of new men under Cnut and his sons?²

The opportunity to broach a new subject arises from research undertaken in 2010–12 for *Profile of a Doomed Elite* (PDE), a pilot for a larger and longer-term project which aims to identify all persons named in Domesday Book as holding land in 1066, and thus to allow the structure of landed society on the eve of the Norman Conquest to be described, analysed, and compared with what came after. The pilot refined a methodology for identification first sketched elsewhere,³ produced

over 1,100 biographical profiles of individuals with supporting maps and tables (together with discussion of almost 500 different personal names), and published them on the web as part of the *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England* (PASE).⁴ Work on further names and profiles has continued since 2012. 'Identification' means distinguishing persons of the same name, and assigning to individuals all the parcels of land which they owned, as well as gathering and making sense of information in Domesday Book and other sources about family, lordship, career, and estate history. As a pragmatic aid to keeping different landowners distinct, PDE has assigned bynames to those who lack them in the historical record, supplementing the numbering system that has always been a feature of PASE; the usual practice has been to coin a topographical byname from the largest manor owned by each person, adopting what was in fact a common naming custom among the landed classes of late Anglo-Saxon England. In what follows, such invented bynames appear in quotation marks.

The confidence with which judgements about identification can be made varies from absolute certainty to marginal probability, and PDE's profiles indicate positive levels of confidence on a scale from A to E, all of which are above the point at which identity is more likely than not.⁵ Only a relatively small proportion of landowners have been identified to date, and fuller and firmer conclusions about the Danish landowners

of Wessex will have to await completion of the larger project. Not least, it is hard to say much about their relative numbers at different levels of landed society and in different parts of Wessex until the English landowners of Wessex have been identified too, as well as the Danes' namesakes in other parts of England. Enough has emerged from the pilot, however, to show that the phenomenon of eleventh-century Danes acquiring land in the heartland of the English kingdom was real, and to suggest something of its historical trajectory.

Wessex is here taken as Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon (the six historic shires of the old kingdom of the West Saxons), and Cornwall, excluding the three south-eastern shires of Surrey, Sussex, and Kent which happened to share the same earl as Wessex for most of the period 1016–66. Even a cursory examination of Domesday Book reveals scores of Wessex landowners with Danish names, with over 60 different personal names represented across the region, holding some 350 distinct parcels of land.⁶ In pursuit of 'ordinary' landowners of the thegnly class, we can immediately set aside all but one of the Wessex Harolds as referring to Earl Harold, as well as all but one of the Tostis and all the Gyths, Gythas, Gunnhilds, and Stigands, where the names – even where not explicitly identified – are those of Earl Harold's brothers, mother, and sister,⁷ and of the pluralist archbishop of Canterbury and bishop of Winchester.⁸

A few Domesday forms are unresolvably ambiguous, notably the frequent name which the scribe of Great Domesday Book normally rendered *Siuuard*, which could stand for Old Danish Sigwarth or Old English Sigeweard,⁹ and which precisely because of that uncertainty modern scholarship normally renders as Siward. Context sometimes makes it clear that the bearer of the name was of Norse origin, as for the Northumbrian magnate Siward Barn, whose byname was the ON word *barn*, equivalent to OE *cild*, referring to nobility of birth.¹⁰ Besides Siward Barn, there were perhaps a dozen other Siwards holding land

in Wessex in 1066: they have all been taken, provisionally and until proven otherwise, as OE Sigeweard, and do not appear in what follows.

Some of the Danish personal names of pre-Conquest Wessex were common among the landed families of the Danelaw too (Swein, Thorkil, and Ulf, for example); others occur much less frequently there (Carl, Grim, Thorgot) or indeed very rarely (Api, Skræmir, Yric). Who were these Wessex Danes, and how did they become landowners in the core shires of the West Saxon dynasty? Their personal names suggest Danish identity of some kind, but without deeper knowledge about individuals' origins, connections, and wealth, there remain many uncertainties about the social, cultural, and political meaning of Danish nomenclature in Wessex.

All work on the pre-Conquest personal names of Domesday Book is indebted to Olof von Feilitzen's comprehensive study from the 1930s,¹¹ but his book no longer stands alone as a guide and some of his tacit assumptions can be shown to be unfounded. First, the work of Gillian Fellows-Jensen on Danish personal names in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, and that of John Insley on Norfolk, has revealed much more about patterns of naming in two parts of the Danelaw.¹² A firmer grasp of Danish personal nomenclature there offers a clearer perspective on naming in other parts of England too. In particular, it has become easier to see how common or rare certain names were, and thus, when set against the Domesday materials, to judge with greater confidence whether, say, the twenty-five instances of the name Ulf in Wessex are more likely to refer to one man, twenty-five men, or some number in between. Insley's regionally specific work on Scandinavian names in Somerset, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall from late Anglo-Saxon times through the twelfth century is, paradoxically, less useful for present purposes because there is no way of filtering out of the twelfth-century corpus the Danish names which had been adopted in Normandy and were introduced to Wessex by the conquerors of 1066.¹³

A flaw which runs through Feilitzen's attribution

of Domesday spellings to original personal names, for all its philological rigour, is his neglect of the social dimension of naming. The name-forms always need to be approached with social realities in mind, such as the absence of any mass Danish settlement which might have carried names down to the lower reaches of landed society in Wessex. A case in point is the Somerset name which Feilitzen identified as ON Manni. Although that name was undoubtedly used in England (witness the substantial Suffolk thegn Manni Swart,¹⁴ and the abbot of Evesham from 1044 to 1058, Manni alias Wulfmær),¹⁵ the landowner who had a farm-sized holding of ½ virgate worth 4s. in west Somerset is much more likely to have had the OE monothematic name Manna, a name known from a Hampshire example to have been used in Wessex.¹⁶ The Somerset landowner's name was given by Exon Domesday (a preliminary draft of materials for the Domesday Survey for the south-west) as *Mannius*, which ought indeed to represent Manni, but the scribe of Great Domesday Book copied it as *Manno*, suggesting that he recognized it as an English name.¹⁷ Likewise, the *Gest* who had ½ hide worth 10s. at Laverstock in Wiltshire probably bore a name coined from the OE noun *giest*, *gest* ('guest') and not the cognate ON noun: the estate in question had passed by 1086 to Gest's brother, who had the English name Særic.¹⁸ Wherever a Domesday spelling could formally represent either an ON or an OE name it is safer in Wessex to assign it an Insular origin. Thus *Bern* is here regarded as representing OE Beorn, rather than ON Bjorn;¹⁹ *Godmundus* and *Gudmund* OE Guthmund, rather than ON Guðmundr;²⁰ *Caflo* an unrecorded OE Cæfla related to the attested name Cæfel, rather than an ON byname Kaffli;²¹ and the *Sbern* who had 1 virgate in Cornwall OE Osbeorn, rather than Danish Esbern (ON Ásbjorn).²²

Feilitzen was disinclined to give much weight to Anglicized names or to hybridized Anglo-Scandinavian names as the solutions to Domesday spellings, no doubt because his interest was primarily linguistic rather than historical, and

in ultimate origins rather than eleventh-century usage. But some names of Danish origin were already being used so extensively in England that they were well on the way to becoming English names, culturally and even linguistically. The name Ketil, for example, came from Scandinavia and was frequent in the Danelaw, but by the mid eleventh century it was beginning to pass into wider use in the Anglicized form Cytel, evident in the spelling *Chitel* found once in Cornwall.²³ The weakening of associations with its Viking ancestry would help to account for its frequency in Wessex TRE, when there seem to have been at least five landowners of the name, a level of popularity which is simply not found for most Danish names in Wessex. The landowning Ketils and Cytels of Wessex in 1066 ranged in status down to the man who gave his name to the lost place *Chetelescote* on Dartmoor, a single virgate worth 10s.²⁴

There were undoubtedly more hybrid Anglo-Scandinavian names than Feilitzen allowed. Colgrim and Colswein are examples. Feilitzen classified them as Scandinavian, discussing them under their ON forms Kolgrímr and Kolsveinn.²⁵ The second element in each is indeed a common monothematic ON name (Grímr and Sveinn),²⁶ but Scandinavian examples of the compound names seem to come only from Iceland²⁷ and cannot have reached England from that source. Independent coinage in England is more likely. With that in mind, the first element was probably not ON but the English element Col-. Cola was a late OE name formed from the adjective *col* ('coal'), meaning 'black-haired' or 'swarthy'; the simplex name is first evidenced in the earlier tenth century²⁸ and became more common in the eleventh,²⁹ when its use as a name-element gave rise to such novelties as Colling and Colthehn³⁰ as well as being spliced with second name-elements drawn indifferently from ON (Colbeinn and Colbrand as well as Colgrim and Colswein) and OE (Colbeorht, Colmann, and Colwine). The monothematic Cola and the dithematic compounds with OE second elements occur quite widely, in Wessex and beyond.³¹ The

whole family of related names shows signs of relatively low status; outside Domesday Book they were not borne by the highest ranks in landed society but by people of modest or non-landed wealth: witnesses of monastic leases and private wills,³² a royal official,³³ and several moneyers.³⁴ In Wessex, the two identifiable Colgrims who owned land in 1066 were a Hampshire man with notionally 1¼ hides worth 30s.,³⁵ and a farmer in Somerset with just ½ virgate worth 4s.;³⁶ the two Colsweins were a small landowner with ½ hide in west Wiltshire³⁷ and a priest at Winchester.³⁸

Two further names had Danish cultural connotations, though were linguistically English. Huscarl was coined as a name from the OE noun *hūscarl* ('housecarl, member of a corps of elite troops'), a word adopted from the language and social organization of Denmark.³⁹ It passed into use as a name in England in the earlier eleventh century among social groups which were relatively or absolutely low in standing. The identified Huscarls include a moneyer at Chester,⁴⁰ two holders of farm-sized estates in Somerset,⁴¹ a virgater in Norfolk,⁴² and a Devon slave who bought his own freedom some time around the year 1100.⁴³ The only larger landowners were men with £8 and £17 a year in Gloucestershire and Surrey respectively.⁴⁴ The name was English, not Viking; tellingly, it was little used in the long twelfth century in the Danelaw counties of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.⁴⁵ The other name was Northmann, entirely English as a linguistic formation, literally meaning 'man of the North' and as a descriptive noun often referring to a person of Scandinavian origin.⁴⁶ Sometimes it is plain that the personal name was given meaningfully, since Domesday Book mentions Yorkshiremen called Northmann son of Ulf and Northmann son of Maelcolumban,⁴⁷ whose fathers had Norse and Norse-Gaelic names and had given their sons a baptismal name which was English but with a Viking slant. The Wessex landowners called Northmann are excluded from consideration here, though we know that one of them was in fact the son of a Dane.⁴⁸

Another of Feilitzen's strategies in solving Domesday name-forms was to prefer a Continental Germanic origin over any possible Anglo-Scandinavian hybrid. Thus for the spelling *Carman* he followed Thorvald Forssner in suggesting the attested CG name Carlman, or (as an alternative) a nickname formed from the late OE word *carlman*, meaning 'male, man'.⁴⁹ In fact the name is far more likely to be an Anglo-Scandinavian hybrid, using the Danish name Carl as the first element and the popular late OE element –mann as the second. The person in question shared a Wiltshire holding of 2½ hides worth 20s. with an Englishman (Sigegar), and the holding was almost certainly already attached in some way to the lands of the Danish grandee Carl;⁵⁰ Carlmann had quite likely been named in honour of Carl. A further example of Feilitzen's preference for CG explanations is that although he allowed Thorbert to be a hybrid name with an ON first element, he regarded the second element as CG –bert rather than (the more likely) OE –beorht.⁵¹

Anglicized names like Ketil/Cytel and Anglo-Danish hybrids like Carlmann, Colgrim, Colswein, and Thorbert are evidence for Scandinavian influences on English naming culture in the eleventh century, but not necessarily for the arrival of Danish landowners in Wessex. The name-stock of English landed society well beyond the Danelaw was undoubtedly influenced by Scandinavian practices and fashions,⁵² but it remains an open question how far name-giving was linked to or independent of cultural affinity, language use, and descent.

An important matter of chronology to be borne in mind in what follows concerns the likely ages of landowners named in Domesday Book for TRE, and thus the period – and historical circumstances – in which they received their given names. In principle, the great majority must have been between about 20 and 60 years old in 1066, that is, born in the period 1006–45. If the age cohorts were all the same size, then a quarter of TRE landowners were named in the last decade of the reign of Æthelred II (978–1016), half under Cnut (1016–35), say 16 per cent under Harold I

(1035/7–1040) and Harthacnut (1040–2), and 8 per cent in the earliest years of Edward. In practice the age cohorts are unlikely to have been evenly distributed, and even a back-of-the-envelope adjustment for likely average ages at death and succession among male members of landed society in the eleventh century suggests a bunching in the middle, with fewer landowners in their fifties and early twenties; it is very likely that a clear majority of TRE landowners were given their baptismal names while the Danish kings ruled England.

In principle, one would like to be able to distinguish three types of Wessex landowners with Danish names in 1066, what one might call Real Danes, Anglo-Danes, and Adoptive Danes. Real Danes would be first- or second-generation migrants from Denmark. The men who fought with Swein and Cnut during the final campaigns of 1013–16 were surely all dead by 1066 (none of Cnut's known associates survived that long), though most of their sons would have been living. Doubtless some Danish migrants came later too, accompanying Cnut when he returned to England in 1023 and 1029, or arriving with Harthacnut in 1040. Several of the Wessex Danes discussed below had 'the Dane' as a byname; at a stretch we might accept that they were of the second generation, with a Danish parent but themselves born in England, though it is perhaps more likely until proven otherwise that they were what their bynames claimed, Real Danes.

By Anglo-Danes I mean families long settled in the Danelaw, descendants of the original Viking settlers in the later ninth century. The Danelaw had a rich stock of personal names of Scandinavian origin (a richness fully revealed not in Domesday Book but by twelfth-century and later sources), after six or eight generations of intermarriage and cultural accommodation between English and Viking traditions.⁵³ It was hardly possible to say, looking at the faces in meetings of shire and wapentake in Lincolnshire or Nottinghamshire, who was English and who Danish. Danelaw families which retained or acquired Danish cultural

norms in their personal naming can sometimes be glimpsed in the records of the tenth and eleventh centuries acquiring land and power beyond the Danelaw. Such Anglo-Danes could have acquired land in Wessex at any time before 1066 as additions to core holdings in eastern and northern England.

Adoptive Danes were English families which took on elements of Danish identity during the reigns of Cnut and his sons by using Danish names, irrespective of their actual descent, though undoubtedly sometimes after intermarriage. The family of Earl Godwine is the prime example: four sons had Danish names, one English. At a less elevated but still wealthy social level, the Warwickshire family of Æthelwine the sheriff – seven brothers with native English names (his siblings were Æthelmær, Leofwine, Ælfsige, Ælfric, Ordric, and Eadmær) – started using Danish names in the next generation, with two Ketilberns, two Thorkils, and a Guthmund.⁵⁴ Cultural preference, whether or not informed by calculations about political advantage, must have lain behind the choice of names for sons and daughters at many levels of English landed society under Cnut and his sons. A switch back to English norms, or even to Norman preferences, may well have begun after Edward came to the throne but cannot have been strongly represented in the name-stock of adult landowners in 1066 for the chronological reasons outlined above.

The spread of Danish name-giving among English families of the highest social rank was doubtless encouraged by the fact that Cnut's court was emphatically Danish in cultural orientation. Icelandic skalds visited the court and recited traditional praise poetry for the king before mixed audiences of Danes and Englishmen.⁵⁵ Perhaps the most important physical location for such enactments of Viking identity was the West Saxon royal city of Winchester, and in particular the cathedral, the Old Minster, which Cnut turned into a mausoleum for himself and his family, adorned with a vast stone frieze depicting the saga scenes of Sigurd, a foundation story of his dynasty.⁵⁶

Another focus for Danishness in eleventh-century Wessex may have existed at Wallingford, on the Berkshire bank of the Thames downstream from Oxford. A line in Domesday Book says that King Edward had 15 acres in the borough 'on which the housecarls used to live' (*in quibus manebant huscarles*),⁵⁷ a phrase which has naturally been read as indicating a garrison of Danish soldiers.⁵⁸ *Manebant* clearly meant residency on the land in question, since the same verb was used a few lines earlier of the men who lived in tenements on the king's land in Wallingford (*qui ibi manebant*).⁵⁹ The housecarls' 15 acres was in addition to (and thus perhaps physically distinct from) the king's men's 8 virgates.⁶⁰ One acre of the 15 was attached to the nearby manor of Long Wittenham (Berks.), held TRE by Queen Eadgyth, and so must have included the eight tenements in Wallingford referred to in its Domesday entry.⁶¹ At that average density, the 15 acres occupied by the housecarls will have included 120 tenements, which sounds about right for an elite group of fighting men who formed a kind of royal bodyguard. 'Garrison' is probably the wrong word for this settlement, if it implies that the housecarls primarily served as a local defence force; maybe Wallingford was more like their home depot. Their houses may well have occupied much of the large site taken after the Conquest for the castle; its construction entailed the removal of only eight of the burgesses' 276 tenements, but might also have swallowed up the greater part of the housecarls' compound; apart from the manorial attachment to Long Wittenham, the housecarls' land was in the hands of the castellan Miles Crispin in 1086.⁶²

How Wessex was governed during and after Cnut's reign is important for understanding how Danes of whatever description became established as landowners. Cnut initially kept Wessex in his own hands, without an earl, but probably from 1020 and certainly from 1023 the earldom was held by Godwine, a new man planted in Wessex. He remained earl for the rest of Cnut's reign, under Harold I and Harthacnut, and throughout

Edward's early years.⁶³ The Danish kings were often present in England, but after the earliest years of Cnut's reign, Wessex was under Godwine's watch. He was the most powerful English supporter of the new dynasty.

Godwine was bound into Cnut's regime in any number of ways. He fought with Cnut in Denmark; was given as his wife the sister of Cnut's brother-in-law Earl Ulf; named his first-born son after Cnut's father Swein, ravager and conqueror of Æthelred's kingdom, and his second son after Swein's father, the great Harold Bluetooth, first Christian king of the Danes. Two more sons had Danish names; a daughter shared a name with the king's daughter, Gunnhild. The earl was the recipient of vast estates across Wessex and unparalleled opportunities for further enlarging his lands and lordships over an almost unbroken period of thirty years.⁶⁴ Danish rule over Wessex was a partnership between the kings and a loyal English earl.

The direct evidence for grants of land in Wessex by the three Danish kings is slender and unlikely to be representative: only eight charters survive which document Cnut's grants to laymen and none for either Harold I or Harthacnut. Seven of Cnut's charters are for estates in Wessex which passed later into the hands of religious communities: two in Hampshire to the Old Minster at Winchester; one in Devon to the bishop of Exeter (with a second estate remaining in lay hands but the charter also preserved at Exeter); and three in Dorset variously to the local houses at Shaftesbury, Abbotsbury, and Horton. This group of charters will bear cautious analysis. Both Hampshire manors were gifts to Englishmen, Earl Godwine himself in 1033,⁶⁵ and an Englishman with a Danish father, Leofwine *Bondansunu*, 'son of Bondi', in 1023.⁶⁶ The two Devon estates, both very much smaller, were also given to men with English names: Æthelric in 1031 and Hunuwine in 1033.⁶⁷ All three of the grants in Dorset were of single estates to king's thegns bearing Danish names: Agemund received 16 hides in 1019, Orc 7 hides in 1024, and Bovi 7 hides in 1033.⁶⁸ The charters serve to show in general

terms that men with Danish names acquired quite substantial manors in Wessex direct from Cnut throughout his reign, but the circumstances in which the charters in question have survived make it unsafe to read anything more into their small numbers and restricted geographical distribution.⁶⁹

The provisional identifications which follow give us a total number of Wessex landowners with Danish names, but what proportion of landed society they represented will remain elusive until the doomed elite of 1066 has been fully profiled. For the moment, a proxy measure can be obtained from the numbers of manors in the hands of owners with Danish and English names, regardless of how many individuals there were. The following calculations exclude the estates of the king, earls, and church, as well as all the manors (overwhelmingly rather small ones) for which we lack the name of the owner TRE, either because Domesday omits the information altogether or (more commonly) because it numbers the owners without naming them: 'ten thegns',⁷⁰ 'six Englishmen',⁷¹ 'three brothers',⁷² or, in another region, 'one little old lady' (*quædam uetula*).⁷³

Across Wessex as a whole, about one in ten thegns' manors were owned TRE by men with Danish names. There were marked differences within the region, broadly a gradation from east to west: 17 per cent in Berkshire and Hampshire, 14 per cent in Wiltshire, 8–9 per cent in each of Somerset, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall. Those figures do not allow for the landowners who were not named, who must have been overwhelmingly English. There were certainly differences in the average size and value of Wessex manors held by Danish-named and English-named landowners, 'Danish' manors being significantly larger than 'English' ones. Note that in Nottinghamshire (taken as a representative shire of the Danelaw) there was hardly any difference: on average, the holdings of owners with English personal names were assessed at 0.7 carucates and worth £1.2, against 0.8 carucates and £1.5 for holdings of owners with Danish names. In Dorset (taken here

as a representative West Saxon shire) the equivalents were 3.3 hides and £3.2 for the English, against a considerably larger 5.3 hides and £5.2 for the Danish. This suggests a hypothesis that needs testing by further research: that in Nottinghamshire (and, by extension, the Danelaw), there was no economic or social distinction between owners with native and Danish names, whereas in Dorset (and, by extension, Wessex), the Danes were richer. If proven, the hypothesis may have implications for how Danish as against English families had acquired their estates in Wessex, and for how long they had owned them.

For the purposes of this paper, Danish landowners in Wessex are divided into five bands, based on the annual values of manors reported in Domesday Book. The bands are provisional, intended as a pragmatic way of creating groups which are comprehensible as types of landowner in terms of geographical reach as well as value, and so of the social standing which they reinforced:

- magnates (over £100)
- great landowners (£30–£100)
- greater thegns (£10–£30)
- lesser thegns (£2–£10)
- rich farmers (under £2)

The thresholds between the five groups are inevitably somewhat arbitrary. At the upper end, the point is to try to distinguish 'great landowners' with essentially regional interests from the supra-regional magnates. Whether that is the most meaningful distinction in the upper echelons of landed society remains to be tested against a wider group than is being examined here. The boundary between regional landowners and shire-based thegns seems more solid, at least for present purposes, since the greater thegns are concentrated towards the lower end of the income band of £10–£30. The two groups of thegns, greater and lesser, are intended to be broadly comparable – in how their landed estates were distributed geographically – with the county gentry and parish gentry of later periods. This scheme deliberately avoids the break points used in other studies – 5 hides (or £5) for

a thegn and 40 hides (or £40) for a nobleman – which rely on normative texts⁷⁴ rather than the social realities of the mid eleventh century. The bands adopted here may not in the end prove the most useful in analysing late Anglo-Saxon landed society, but they are a start.

Magnates

The magnates owned a great deal of land, and typically had manors that were individually valuable and very widely scattered as well as numerous. Their landed estates tended to be supra-regional in character rather than truly national, that is to say, they extended into two or more regions (Wessex, the south-east, western Mercia, the southern Danelaw, East Anglia, *etc.*) but not all of them. Some were worth three, four, or even five times as much as the threshold of £100 a year. For context, £100 was as much as many abbots and the least well-provided bishops (Rochester and Lichfield) drew from their estates, but only half that of even the junior members of the earls' families (Leofwine and Gyrth). At the very top level, £500 a year was as rich in land as the richest abbots (Westminster and Glastonbury). By comparison, Earl Harold had £3,000 and King Edward £8,000.

On current reckoning, ten Danish magnates owned land in Wessex in 1066 (Table 11.1). Two were from the uppermost stratum between £400 and £500 a year, but only one of the others surpassed £200, and that not by much. Four of them had significant holdings in Wessex, making them magnates even in Wessex alone, irrespective of holdings elsewhere; all four, coincidentally, had around £120 from Wessex. At the other end of the scale, two magnates had under £30 from their Wessex manors. Not more than five of the ten can really be thought of as Wessex magnates in the sense of deriving around half or more of their landed income from estates in the region or having some other special connection with it. The essence of magnate status was, in any case, the possession of landed interests which transcended any single regional affiliation.

The Domesday evidence for urban wealth and lordship is skewed towards a few counties, though allows us to see that Esgar the staller had property in Gloucester – a shire where he had no land – and commended men in two shires where he had no estates as well as in shires where he did. We can in fact take it that all the magnates had significant urban property and numerous retainers who were themselves landed proprietors.

Table 11.1. The Danish magnates of Wessex TRE.

Landowner	Total value of estates (£)	Total value of estates in Wessex (£)	Proportion of value of estates in Wessex (%)	Core shires, with proportion of estates therein (%)
Aki the Dane	120	27	22	Herts., Essex, Suff. (57)
Azur son of Thorth	494	124	25	Suss., Surr., Kent (52)
Bondi the staller	182	118	65	Dors., Hants, Wilts. (51)
Carl	139	127	86	Wilts. (71)
Esgar the staller	458	52	11	Essex, Mdx, Herts. (71)
Mærleswein	218	125	57	Som., Devon, Cornw. (53)
Osgot of Hailes	108	29	27	Glos. (51)
Saxi the housecarl	121	55	45	–
Siward Barn	189	48	25	–
Wigot of Wallingford	145	48	34	Oxon. (?)

The greatest Danish magnate with large holdings in Wessex was Azur son of Thorth (Table 11.2; Figure 11.1). Azur appears in the existing literature with a relatively modest estate worth £116,⁷⁵ but research for PDE has established the likelihood that he was the same man who elsewhere in Domesday Book is called Azur son of Toti (Toti being a short form of the name Thorth) and (in Kent) Azur of Lessness, with property worth nearly £500 extending across twelve shires from Somerset to Northamptonshire to Kent.⁷⁶ He was among the very wealthiest landowners in England below the king and earls. A little over a third of his landed estate was in Sussex, where he was the richest landowner after Edward and Harold, better provided even than the bishop of Selsey. Over half his landed wealth lay in the south-east (Sussex, Surrey, and Kent), but Wiltshire was his second most important shire after Sussex, and his sixteen Wessex manors (half of them in Wiltshire) accounted for a quarter of his estate in 1066.

The estate history of Ditchampton (Wilts.), a suburb of the monastic town of Wilton, proves that

Azur's father was the Thorth who was prominent at court throughout the time of the Danish kings and into Edward's reign. In 1045, the king gave the 2½ hides of Ditchampton to Thorth, probably already with the idea that he would present it to the nuns at the royal monastery of Wilton, where two of Thorth's daughters were about to join the community; in fact, for whatever reason, their brother Azur retained possession of 2 hides in 1066.⁷⁷ Thorth was close to Cnut, witnessing the earliest extant charters of the reign first among the thegns, and continued to witness royal charters over a career at court of twenty-seven years, disappearing during 1045.⁷⁸ Such a prominent follower newly arrived in England may have been given an English heiress soon afterwards, plausibly dating Azur's birth within a few years either side of 1020 and putting Azur in his mid twenties at his father's probable death, around thirty when he first appears in the documentary record (at the Oxfordshire shire court in 1051⁷⁹ and selling a Gloucestershire manor to Earl Godwine before 1053⁸⁰), and in his mid forties in 1066. Further

Table 11.2. TRE holdings of Azur son of Thorth. Note: In this and subsequent tables, monetary values are calculated in £ and decimal proportions thereof rather than £ s. d.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Buckinghamshire	8	38.25	8	36.00	7
Dorset	3	11.25	2	6.25	1
Hampshire	3	16.50	3	16.50	3
Kent	1	20.00	4	20.00	4
Middlesex	1	25.00	5	20.00	4
Northamptonshire	6	15.50	3	22.50	5
Oxfordshire	5	27.00	5	23.50	5
Somerset	2	21.00	4	12.50	3
Surrey	8	83.00	17	62.00	13
Sussex	25	157.75	31	174.40	35
Warwickshire	3	18.50	4	12.00	2
Wiltshire	8	68.75	14	88.50	18
Wessex	16	117.50	23	123.75	25
Elsewhere	57	385.00	77	370.40	75
Total	73	502.50	100	494.15	100

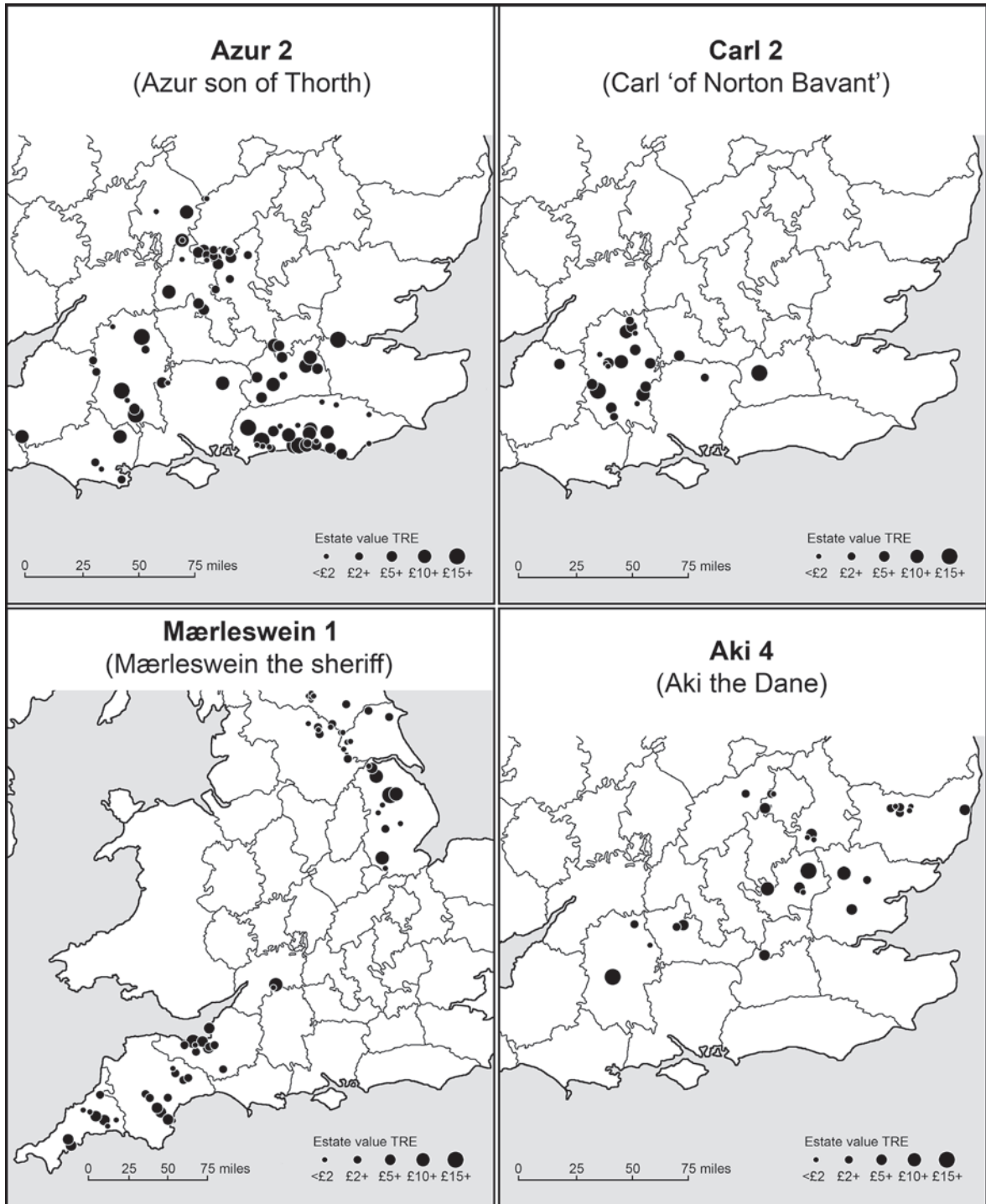


Figure 11.1. Landed estates of selected magnates. (Map drawn by Duncan Probert)

detailed work on estate histories might help to establish which parts of Azur's vast landed property had belonged to his father and which were newly acquired by Azur himself during Edward's reign.

Bondi the staller (Table 11.3) was more obviously a Wessex magnate. His identification depends on linking the predecessor of Henry de Ferrers, who held large manors spread between Berkshire and Essex, with the Bondi whose property elsewhere in Wessex and in Kent was acquired by other Normans; their identity is recommended by the size of the manors concerned, their broad geographical pattern, the relative infrequency of the name among TRE landowners, and the fact that a small manor near Gloucester which had been Bondi the staller's (and, as such, was claimed by Ferrers) had certainly passed, it seems legitimately, to one of the other Normans.⁸¹ With rather less confidence, Bondi could be assigned another two manors worth £15 in Oxfordshire, where Domesday's statement about pre-Conquest tenure is ambiguous,⁸² and perhaps another Hampshire manor worth £15 on lease from the nuns of Winchester.⁸³

Bondi had a tenant of his own in Hampshire and

commended men in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, one of the latter a sizable landowner in his own right, with a manor of 7 hides.⁸⁴ Why would such a man in the distant claylands of north Buckinghamshire commend himself to someone who was ostensibly a Wessex magnate? Perhaps because Bondi's family origins were in south-east Mercia. If so, they had grown by 1066 to a wide scattering across eleven shires between Gloucester, Dorset, Essex, and Northamptonshire, with two thirds in Wessex. Bondi's designation as a staller and his charter attestations, which suggest that he was appointed to a senior position in the king's household around 1060,⁸⁵ hint that he grew rich quickly on the back of royal service.

Identification is easier with the Wiltshire thegn Carl (Table 11.4; Figure 11.1), because all his manors in Wiltshire, Somerset, Hampshire, and Surrey went after the Conquest to Alfred of Marlborough.⁸⁶ Probably the same Carl had Speen in south Berkshire, which passed to a minor Norman tenant-in-chief instead,⁸⁷ but not the manor in Sussex which must once have lain within the great royal manor of Steyning.⁸⁸ Carl's manors were much more concentrated than Bondi's, and

Table 11.3. TRE holdings of Bondi the staller.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	2	18.25	12	20.00	11
Buckinghamshire	2	9.00	6	12.00	7
Dorset	2	30.00	20	40.00	22
Essex	3	23.00	15	30.00	17
Gloucestershire	1	3.00	2	1.00	1
Hampshire	3	27.50	18	27.75	15
Kent	1	3.00	2	8.00	4
Northamptonshire	2	14.08	9	6.00	3
Oxfordshire	1	8.00	5	7.00	4
Somerset	1	5.00	3	5.00	3
Wiltshire	1	10.00	7	25.00	14
Wessex	9	90.75	60	117.75	65
Elsewhere	10	60.08	40	64.00	35
Total	19	150.83	100	181.75	100

he was unusual among the magnates in having so much of his property in just one shire.

Mærleswein the sheriff (Table 11.5; Figure 11.1) had estates spread across Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset, with a couple of outliers in Gloucestershire, but also a second cluster far away in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. His identity is clear from his very unusual name and from the succession after 1066 of Ralph Paynel in both regions.⁸⁹ Mærleswein served as sheriff of Lincolnshire under King Harold in 1066 and was confirmed in office by William I, but fled to Scotland with Edgar the atheling in 1068. He returned to take part in the northern rebellion against the Normans in 1070, and finally disappeared back to Scotland. Although he has been regarded as ‘primarily a northerner’,⁹⁰ over half the value of his manors was in Wessex, and

there seem to be different geographical patterns in the two regions. His Wessex manors were scattered in a way like other magnate estates, but his manors in the northern Danelaw had what seems a more artificial distribution, even a purposeful one, strung out from south to north; many of them lay near the route from southern England via Lincoln and York, along Roman roads through the entire length of Lincolnshire from the Welland to the Humber, then following the River Ouse upstream to York, and finally the Roman road up Swaledale towards Stainmore and the north. If anything, the Wessex manors look like family lands, and the Danelaw manors like an official estate constructed when Mærleswein was appointed to a military command in the north.

Mærleswein’s name suggests an Anglo-Danish

Table 11.4. TRE holdings of Carl.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	1	10.00	6	8.00	5
Hampshire	2	13.50	8	10.00	7
Somerset	1	5.00	3	5.00	3
Surrey	1	20.00	12	20.00	14
Wiltshire	15	112.79	70	103.60	71
Wessex	19	141.29	88	126.60	86
Elsewhere	1	20.00	12	20.00	14
Total	20	161.29	100	146.60	100

Table 11.5. TRE holdings of Mærleswein.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Cornwall	9	25.00	10	33.00	15
Devon	10	12.00	5	41.50	19
Gloucestershire	1	4.50	2	10.00	5
Lincolnshire	8	48.75	20	61.50	28
Somerset	10	25.75	10	40.50	19
Yorkshire	14	131.88	53	31.00	14
Wessex (+ Glos.)	30	67.25	27	125.00	57
Elsewhere	22	180.63	73	92.50	43
Total	52	247.88	100	217.50	100

identity. The second element is the Viking name Swein (ON Sveinn), which was used in other compounds, but the first element has given rise to much bafflement.⁹¹ It appears Old English rather than Old Norse but is not on record either as an independent name or as an element in other dithematic names, and conjectural personal names reconstructed from place-names have formed the bulk of the evidence deployed. By far the most convincing suggestion is that there was an unrecorded OE personal name Mærel (strong form) or Mærle (weak form).⁹² Family estates in the far south-west, a hybrid Anglo-Scandinavian name, and a shrievalty in the Danelaw might be taken to suggest a second-generation Dane whose father had married into the regional aristocracy of Wessex.

The housecarl Saxi (Table 11.6) had an estate whose formation has some parallels with Mærleswein's, since it was more or less evenly balanced between Wessex (a tight group of six manors astride the boundary between Hampshire and Berkshire) and elsewhere, in this case the southern Danelaw (nine manors scattered across five shires).⁹³ The two clusters have not previously been connected,⁹⁴ but both sets of manors seem to have passed initially after 1066 to Earl William fitzOsbern. The Hampshire manor in King William's hands in 1086 (and presumably the three Berkshire manors too) had once been in

the fief of fitzOsbern's son Earl Roger, and others in both geographical groups belonged to men closely connected with fitzOsbern: his *minister* Gilbert fitzTurolde, his brother-in-law Ralph de Tosny, two men to whom he had apparently given lands in the Welsh marches (Thurstan fitzRolf and William d'Écouis), and a tenant named from one of the places in Normandy where he had founded a monastery (Jocelin de Cormeilles).⁹⁵ There is probably another reference to fitzOsbern as Saxi's successor in the fact that in 1086 Hugh de Bolbec was said to hold one of Saxi's Huntingdonshire manors 'from Earl William' (*tenet de comite Willelmo*); the phrase has elsewhere been taken as referring to William de Warenne (not an earl until 1088) and even to King William,⁹⁶ but more likely the scribe merely put the verb in the wrong tense.

The Wessex connection of Wigot of Wallingford (Table 11.7) was less through the manors that he owned there than through his bynaming after the shire borough of Berkshire. His byname is found both in Domesday Book and in a writ of Edward the Confessor which also identifies him as the king's 'dear cousin' (*mine leofne mæi*).⁹⁷ Although he is nowhere named in the Domesday entry for the borough,⁹⁸ he held property nearby, on the facing Oxfordshire bank of the Thames at Goring and Gatehampton. Wigot's landed estate as a whole was spread across eight shires and had

Table 11.6. *TRE holdings of Saxi the housecarl.*

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	2	14.00	17	14.00	12
Buckinghamshire	1	19.00	23	16.00	13
Cambridgeshire	1	4.50	6	8.00	7
Essex	3	5.28	7	18.50	15
Hampshire	4	25.63	32	40.50	33
Hertfordshire	1	4.75	6	14.00	12
Huntingdonshire	3	8.00	10	10.00	8
Wessex	6	39.63	49	54.50	45
Elsewhere	9	41.53	51	66.50	55
Total	15	81.16	100	121.00	100

Wallingford at almost its exact centre. Besides the sixteen manors where Wigot's name appears in Domesday Book,⁹⁹ it included as his most valuable manor anywhere Ogbourne (Wilts.), where the scribe of Great Domesday left a gap for the name of the TRE holder, who is identified by a corresponding entry in the Geld Accounts for the hundred concerned.¹⁰⁰ Less certainly, as they lack any statement in Domesday Book about their TRE tenure, Wigot also held some, many, or (least likely) all of the numerous other Oxfordshire manors which had come by 1086 into the hands of Robert d'Oilly, who had married his daughter Ealdgyth.¹⁰¹ They amounted to nearly two dozen manors worth £120.¹⁰²

Wigot's name appears as a witness in five forged royal charters purporting to date from the years 1062–6; the texts in their present form identify him variously as a thegn (*minister*), butler (*pincerna*), steward (*procurator*), and most bizarrely as 'Wigot of Lincoln'.¹⁰³ The last three titles are bogus or garbled; what can be gleaned reliably from the charters is that Wigot must have appeared in some genuine but lost charter witness lists as a staller, like the other *procuratores* of the supposed Wells charter of 1065, Robert fitzWimarc, Esgar, Ralph,

and Bondi. His particular office is suggested by the fact that the monks of Abingdon remembered him as 'lord of the *oppidani* of Wallingford';¹⁰⁴ in classical Latin *oppidani* were 'townsmen' but in twelfth-century England *oppidum* came to mean a castle, and the choice of that word to describe Wigot may reflect his command of the housecarls based at Wallingford.

The Danish magnates with land in Wessex whose centres of power lay in other regions were led, in point of wealth, by Esgar the staller (Table 11.8), marshal of the king's household, sheriff of Middlesex, and leader of the London army. Esgar was a third-generation Dane in England, the grandson of Tovi the Proud, himself a staller who must have started in the service of King Æthelred II. Esgar's estates were surprisingly concentrated for their huge value. The core (a third of the total) was in Essex; Essex, Middlesex, and Hertfordshire together accounted for nearly 70 per cent.¹⁰⁵ In Wessex, he owned three Berkshire manors worth £52; they passed after the Conquest, with nearly all the rest of his property, to Geoffrey de Mandeville.¹⁰⁶

Siward Barn (Table 11.9) was probably a Northumbrian magnate (Northumbrian estates were not recorded in Domesday Book) with

Table 11.7. TRE holdings of Wigot of Wallingford. Note: Oxfordshire perhaps as many as another 23 manors of 145 hides worth £120; on those figures, Oxfordshire would account for 61 per cent by hidage and 58 per cent by value, Wessex 16 per cent by hidage and 18 per cent by value.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	1	10.00	6	15.00	10
Buckinghamshire	2	17.50	11	18.00	13
Gloucestershire	2	1.75	1	7.00	5
Middlesex	2	16.00	10	18.00	13
Oxfordshire	4	42.00	26	27.00	19
Sussex	2	33.00	20	23.00	16
Warwickshire	1	5.00	3	2.00	1
Wiltshire	3	38.00	23	33.00	23
Wessex	4	48.00	29	48.00	34
Elsewhere	13	115.25	71	95.00	66
Total	17	163.25	100	143.00	100

property south of the Tees which straggled from the head of the Humber estuary south through Derbyshire, Warwickshire, and probably Oxfordshire to Berkshire.¹⁰⁷

Aki the Dane (Table 11.10; Figure 11.1) had manors scattered between Suffolk and Wiltshire. His close involvement in other regions is shown

variously by his lordship over fully a tenth of the burgesses of Hertford and his major stake in the important coastal borough of Dunwich in Suffolk; he had connections with the abbeys of St Albans and Westminster, was probably the Aki who witnessed a charter of Harthacnut for Abingdon abbey, and was probably also the Aki son of Toki

Table 11.8. TRE holdings of Esgar the staller.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)	Commended men
Bedfordshire						•
Berkshire	3	68.75	20	52.00	11	
Buckinghamshire	2	34.25	10	19.00	4	•
Cambridgeshire						•
Essex	12	64.93	19	155.00	34	•
Gloucestershire	urban					
Hertfordshire	2	33.25	9	68.00	15	•
Middlesex	3	80.00	23	102.00	22	•
Norfolk						•
Northamptonshire	8	15.97	5	18.40	4	•
Oxfordshire	3	19.25	5	17.25	4	
Suffolk	2	4.00	1	11.00	2	•
Warwickshire	1	30.00	9	15.00	3	
Wessex	3	68.75	20	52.00	11	
Elsewhere	33	281.65	80	405.65	89	
Total	36	350.40	100	457.65	100	

Table 11.9. TRE holdings of Siward Barn.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	3	55.00	29	48.00	25
Derbyshire	9	33.33	18	35.00	19
Essex	1	2.25	1	10.00	5
Gloucestershire	1	15.00	8	20.00	11
Lincolnshire	3	15.25	8	15.00	8
Norfolk	2	6.00	3	6.00	3
Nottinghamshire	2	4.19	2	6.30	3
Oxfordshire	3	20.00	11	19.00	10
Warwickshire	6	31.50	17	25.50	14
Yorkshire	1	6.00	3	4.00	2
Wessex	3	55.00	29	48.00	25
Elsewhere	28	133.52	71	140.80	75
Total	31	188.52	100	188.80	100

who extracted a huge sum of money from the monks of Worcester to hand over a manor which his father had left to the church.¹⁰⁸

Finally, Osgot of Hailes (Table 11.11) was a landed proprietor in the Cotswolds and the Thames valley. His identification is securely based on the succession to the greater part of his estates by William fitzRichard alias William Leofric, though others of his manors were dispersed for reasons which are not yet apparent.¹⁰⁹ Osgot was given his topographical byname (from one of his Gloucestershire manors) in a witness list of

the earlier or mid 1050s attached to a Worcester charter.¹¹⁰ His forename was an Anglicized version of ON Ásgautr, substituting the OE first element Os-.¹¹¹ Osgot had exactly equal shares in the Berkshire manors of Childrey and Sparsholt with two other men, so perfectly divided that it is impossible to resist the deduction that the three men were brothers.¹¹² The other two had English names, Beorhtric and Edmund, and Osgot seems at most an Adoptive Dane, the one brother in three given a name which nodded towards accommodation with Cnut.

Table 11.10. TRE holdings of Aki the Dane.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	2	10.00	11	9.00	7
Cambridgeshire	3	4.08	4	7.64	6
Essex	3	10.75	11	17.00	14
Hertfordshire	3	16.25	17	37.00	30
Huntingdonshire	2	11.00	12	10.00	8
Middlesex	1	8.00	8	6.00	5
Northamptonshire	2	3.50	4	2.50	2
Suffolk	7	13.27	14	15.83	13
Wiltshire	3	18.00	19	18.00	15
Wessex	5	28.00	30	27.00	22
Elsewhere	21	66.85	70	95.97	78
Total	26	94.85	100	122.97	100

Table 11.11. TRE holdings of Osgot of Hailes.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Berkshire	3	30.33	29	29.33	27
Buckinghamshire	1	8.25	8	9.00	8
Essex	1	7.00	7	6.00	6
Gloucestershire	7	47.13	45	55.50	51
Herefordshire	1	1.00	1	0.25	0
Oxfordshire	1	3.42	3	2.00	2
Surrey	1	3.50	3	1.20	1
Worcestershire	1	5.00	5	5.00	5
Wessex	3	30.33	29	29.33	27
Elsewhere	13	75.30	71	78.95	73
Total	16	105.63	100	108.28	100

The Danish-named magnates who had property in Wessex in 1066 thus included several who must be accounted Real Danes of the second generation: certainly Azur son of Thorth, probably Aki the Dane (son of Toki) and Mærleswein, perhaps Bondi the staller. Esgar the staller and Siward Barn both had deeper Danish ancestry and a landed base outside Wessex. Osgot of Hailes seems an Adoptive Dane, and there is an element of Adoptive Danishness about Esgar, too, since the family was in a sense reinventing itself as Danish when his father Athelstan, who bore a royal English forename, chose a Danish name for his son.

Great Landowners

Great landowners are here defined as regional nobles with estates in the range £30–£100 a year. None owned land in fewer than three shires, but they tended to have their landed wealth concentrated quite heavily in just one or at most two adjoining shires (Table 11.12). On average, their manors were smaller than magnate-owned properties (mean value £4.6 against £7.1) as well as being fewer in number. As with the magnates, we can distinguish great landowners based in Wessex from those whose core estates were elsewhere. Six in each category have been identified. Two of the insiders, Tholf the Dane and John the Dane, are discussed as detailed case studies in the appendix below. Tholf was the wealthiest great landowner whose property was confined to Wessex, with a value which made him almost as significant as any of the Danish magnates who had land there.

Ulf presents some difficulties (Figure 11.2). The name was very frequent in Domesday Book, and two great men of the name had property on the fringes of Wessex. The Danelaw magnate Ulf Fenisc, predecessor of Gilbert of Ghent,¹¹³ had estates as far south and west as Ewelme in south Oxfordshire and Whichford at the southern tip of Warwickshire,¹¹⁴ and the king's housecarl Ulf son of Manni Swart had land in Middlesex and Surrey besides the eight manors scattered from

Suffolk to south Gloucestershire which passed after the Conquest to Robert de Tosny.¹¹⁵ Like other magnates, Ulf Fenisc's and Ulf son of Manni's manors were large and valuable, and for that reason alone it is unlikely that either of them was the Ulf who owned as many as twenty-five mostly rather small manors scattered across Devon and into the fringes of Somerset and Dorset.¹¹⁶ Devon had low manorial values, but even so, Ulf's manors lay towards the bottom of the range. They are relatively isolated from other manors assigned to the name Ulf outside Wessex, and the two factors together, distribution and values, make it probable we are dealing with a local landowner.

The other three great landowners local to Wessex can be dealt with more summarily. Esgar the crippled (*contractus*) had eight manors centred in south Devon with one just across the Tamar in Cornwall and a distant outlier on the coast of north Somerset (Figure 11.2).¹¹⁷ Ketil 'of Dibden' had fifteen manors with their core in south Hampshire, including exempt land in the borough of Southampton, but extending also into Wiltshire and Somerset (Figure 11.2). He would qualify for this wealth band even if the less-certain identifications in Somerset and Wiltshire were disallowed.¹¹⁸ Tovi 'of Sutton Scotney' had manors chiefly in north-west Hampshire and west Berkshire (Figure 11.2).¹¹⁹

The six 'outsiders' among the great landowners were based in different regions. Esbern Bigga was the head of an important east Kent family of English origin which extended its holdings beyond Kent probably during Cnut's reign, at the same time that it was adopting some Danish forenames and a Danish byname borne by successive generations.¹²⁰ Esbern had a single manor in Wessex, not far from Winchester. The king's thegn Fulki was wealthiest in Sussex and had all his land near major royal boroughs in the south-east and Wessex, Chichester, Guildford, and Winchester again.¹²¹ The Eskil who owned the valuable 5-hide manor of Mapledurwell in north-east Hampshire was more likely than not Eskil of Beckenham, a landowner in Kent and Surrey.¹²²

Two were based in the Thames valley: Hacon 'of Nuneham', an Oxfordshire man with two small manors in Wessex,¹²³ and Halden, a housecarl of Edward the Confessor whose chief property was the very large manor of Hanslope in Buckinghamshire but who also owned smaller manors scattered across Berkshire, Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, and

Essex.¹²⁴ The Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire thegn Tonni, who only just fails to qualify as a magnate, had a straggle of manors as far south as Berkshire.¹²⁵

One curiosity of the outsiders is that there is little sign of Danish-owned estates spilling across the boundary between Wessex and the three shires

Table 11.12. *The Danish great landowners of Wessex TRE. (Each owner's most important shires are in bold).*

Landowner	Manors	Value (£)	Wessex (£)	Elsewhere (£)
Esbern Bigga	14	80	Hants (4)	Essex (7) Kent (53) Surr. (4) Suss. (8) Warws. (4)
Esgar the crippled	8	59	Cornw. (6) Devon (43) Som. (10)	
Eskil of Beckenham	7	40	Hants (10)	Kent (22) Surr. (8)
Fulki	5	31	Hants (6)	Surr. (3) Suss. (22)
Hacon 'of Nuneham'	7	53	Hants (5) Wilts. (2)	Oxon. (46)
Halden	10	43	Berks. (8)	Bucks. (25) Essex (2) Glos. (2) Herts. (4) Northants (1)
John the Dane	7	54	Devon (6) Dors. (15) Som. (18)	Glos. (15)
Ketil 'of Dibden'	15	41	Hants (31) Som. (5) Wilts. (5)	
Tholf the Dane	18	95	Devon (6) Dors. (39) Hants (36) Som. (10) Wilts. (5)	
Tonni	15	99	Berks. (6)	Lincs. (54) Northants (27) Oxon. (10) Warws. (2)
Tovi 'of Sutton Scotney'	17	49	Berks. (20) Hants (20) Wilts. (10)	
Ulf	25	35	Devon (32) Dors. (<1) Som. (3)	

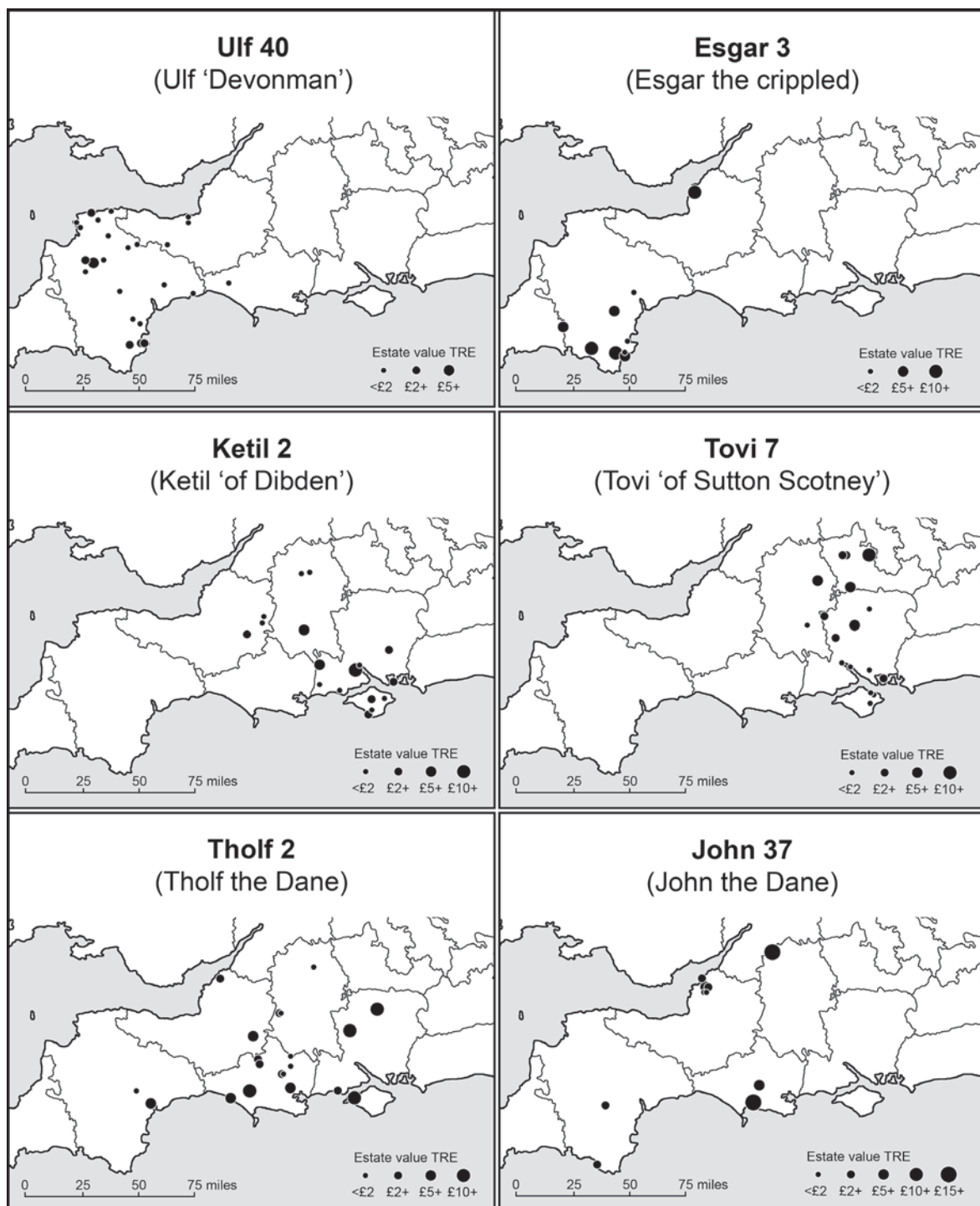


Figure 11.2. Landed estates of selected great landowners. (Map drawn by Duncan Probert)

in south-west Mercia which had Danish earls under Cnut (Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire). The reason may be that the three earls gave land there to men who were their own followers rather than Cnut's.

The great landowners reinforce the conclusions tentatively drawn from the magnates. They had varied origins as Real, Anglo-, and Adoptive Danes, and some were based in Wessex, with others based elsewhere. There are some limited indications of how the outsiders had acquired property in the

south-west, though their typicality is uncertain: Esbern Bigga's solitary manor in Wessex was held from Queen Eadgyth, and Fulki was a tenant of Archbishop Stigand.

Greater and Lesser Thegns

With the greater thegns (£10–£30 a year) we come to a group whose members often had lands confined to a single shire, usually not extending over more than about 10 miles (Table 11.13). One

Table 11.13. *The Danish greater thegns of Wessex TRE.*

Landowner	Shires	Manors	Hides	Value (£)
Agemund 'of Wellow' and Agemund 'of Hotlop' ¹	Hants	10	19	17
Auti 'of Ellisfield' ²	Hants	2	13	15
Bisi 'of Calverton' ³	Berks., Bucks., Oxon.	4	23	25
Grim 'of Thrushelton' ⁴	Cornw., Devon	5	3	14
Ingvar 'of Inwardleigh' ⁵	Devon	5	6	14
Skræmir 'of Bradenstoke' ⁶	Wilts.	2	25	12
Swein 'of Castle Combe' ⁷	Som., Wilts.	3	17	19
Thorkil the Dane 'of Backwell' ⁸	Som.	4	22	14
Thorkil 'of Chalgrove' ⁹	Berks., Oxon.	3	23	21
Toti 'of Donnington' ¹⁰	Berks., Wilts.	4	17	17
Tovi 'of Bradworthy' ¹¹	Devon	2	4	13
Tovi the sheriff ¹²	Som.	8	15	15
Tovi the king's thegn ¹³	Berks., Bucks., Surr.	7	33	28

1. PASE, 'Agemund 14' and 'Agemund 15'.

2. *GDB* fols 46r. Eswelle, 49v. Dummere (*DB: Hants* 23:59; 69:7).

3. PASE, 'Bisi 3'; *GDB* fols 61v. Edtune (*DB: Berks.* 33:8), 150v. Stantone, Calvretone (*DB: Bucks.* 23:32; 26:8), 159v. Hegford (*DB: Oxon.* 35:19).

4. *GDB* fols 108v. Tresetone, Aisselie (*DB: Devon* 17:3, 9), 122r. Languer, 122v. Amal, 123r. Botharder (*DB: Cornw.* 5.2:4; 5.4:10, 13); *GDB* fol. 122r. Languer (*DB: Cornw.* 5.2:20) is here treated as a duplicate of *DB: Cornw.* 5.2:4.

5. *GDB* fols 105v. Cochalescome, 106r. Lege, 111r. Cadebirie, 116r. Tambreton, Blachestane (*DB: Devon* 15:62; 16:23; 21:7; 39:19–20). The later name of his largest manor, Inwardleigh, incorporated his name: *Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names*, ed. Watts, p. 332.

6. PASE, 'Skræmir 1'; *GDB* fols 69v. Stocche, 74v. Tornuele, 74v. col. 2 lines 1–3 (*DB: Wilts.* 24:19; 68:22–3).

7. *GDB* fols 69v. Ticoode, 71r. Come (*DB: Wilts.* 24:30; 27:23), 99r. Claftertone (*DB: Som.* 45:11).

8. *GDB* fols 88r. Clutone, Cliveware, Bacoile, 98r. Calviche (*DB: Som.* 5:14, 19, 30; 44:2); his byname 'the Dane' is given at Exon 450a2.

9. *GDB* fols 60v. Wibalditone, 61r. Chingestune (*DB: Berks.* 21:8; 22:12), 159r. Celgrave (*DB: Oxon.* 35:6).

10. *GDB* fols 61r. Deritone, Aneborne, Mortune (*DB: Berks.* 26:1–3), 72r. Hiwi (*DB: Wilts.* 41:4).

11. *GDB* fol. 114r. Dunewinesdone, Brawordine (*DB: Devon* 34:2, 6).

12. *GDB* fols 87r. Beletone (duplicated at 91v. Belgetone), 88v. Firford, 94v. Berchelei, 98v.–99r. Lopen (= Exon 490b2, where he is identified as the sheriff), Brade, Capilande, Bocheland, Dinescove (*DB: Som.* 1:28 (duplicated at 17:6); 5:35; 22:25; 47:3–5, 7–8).

13. *GDB* fols 34r. Aissele, 34v. Ferlega, 36v. col. 2 lines 18–20, Molesham (*DB: Surr.* 10:1; 19:8; 35:1–2), 63v. Bras (*DB: Berks.* 65:6), 151v. Celfunte, 152v. Hibestanes (*DB: Bucks.* 43:2; 48:1).

of the more scattered estates was that of Tovi, sheriff of Somerset in the 1060s, who went on to serve William I in the same office.¹²⁶ The greater thegns included two Agemunds who shared a group of manors in Hampshire. All the people profiled in this section look something like a rank and file of Danish newcomers to the region.

Toti can be taken as representative. He had three manors in west Berkshire, one by the Thames and two on the Downs, containing arable for eleven ploughteams (so perhaps 1,000 or 1,200 acres), some demesne meadow and woodland, and two watermills; in 1086 the peasant tenants on those manors numbered fewer than thirty, and there were small home farms with 1½ ploughs; Toti had also taken 1 hide in Wiltshire on a lease for three lives from Malmesbury abbey.

The lesser thegns are here defined as having lands bringing in £2–£10 a year, generally from only one or two manors (Table 11.14). Viking was unusual in owning a scatter of eleven small properties: they were mostly in the immediate vicinity of Exeter, and he was probably identical with the moneyer *Wicing* who struck coins in the city for the issue assigned to 1059–62,¹²⁷ so may have been a rich townsman who had bought rural property rather than chiefly a rural landowner. Very likely he was the same Viking who was among the witnesses to an agreement about a south Devon manor in 1045 or 1046, and, as Viking the boatswain, to a manumission of about the same period at Topsham near Exeter.¹²⁸

Representative among the others was Tunbi's manor at Sunwood, high on the Hampshire Downs near the Sussex border. In 1086, his successor had land for 4 ploughs (perhaps 400–500 acres), divided equally between a home farm and ten peasant farmers; the manor included a small church and some woodland.¹²⁹

Some of the lesser thegns held all their land by dependent tenure: in Hampshire, for example, Herki from the bishop of Winchester, Iusten (jointly with the English-named Leofsige) from the Old Minster, and Elaf from the New Minster. Tunbi and Thorir 'of Funtley' had been the tenants

Notes to Table 11.14

1. PASE, 'Api 2'.
2. PASE 'Azur 9' (forthcoming); *GDB* fols 57*v*. Eddevetone, 62*r*. col. 2 lines 18–10 up (*DB: Berks.* 1:28; 41:6).
3. PASE, 'Colbrand 5'.
4. PASE, 'Colbrand 6'.
5. *GDB* fol. 42*r*. Candevre (*DB: Hants* 6:13).
6. *GDB* fols 62*v*. Avintone (*DB: Berks.* 43:2), 73*r*. Caletone (*DB: Wilts.* 58:1).
7. PASE, 'Gunni 6'.
8. PASE, 'Gunward 2'.
9. PASE, 'Herki 2'.
10. *GDB* fol. 99*r*. Estone (*DB: Som.* 45:10).
11. *GDB* fol. 125*r*. Deliau, Trefrioc (*DB: Cornw.* 5.25:1–2).
12. PASE, 'Iusten 6'.
13. PASE, 'Iusten 7'.
14. *GDB* fol. 114*r*. Ciretone (*DB: Devon* 34:15).
15. *GDB* fol. 70*r*. Sclive, Bichenehilde (*DB: Wilts.* 25:11–12).
16. *GDB* fols 44*r*. col. 2 last 6 lines, 53*r*. Scaldeford 1st and 2nd entries (*DB: Hants* 18:3; *IoW* 7:10; *IoW* 8:1).
17. *GDB* fols 103*r*. Walcome, 106*r*. Acha, 118*r*. Madone (*DB: Devon* 3:90; 16:24; 52:31).
18. PASE, 'Ottar 8'.
19. *GDB* fol. 62*v*. Hurlei (*DB: Berks.* 46:5).
20. PASE, 'Sibbi 3'.
21. *GDB* fol. 60*v*. Chingestune (*DB: Berks.* 21:14).
22. *GDB* fol. 92*v*. Cocintone (*DB: Som.* 19:64).
23. *GDB* fol. 49*v*. Ormeresfelt (*DB: Hants* 68:1).
24. *GDB* fol. 74*v*. Suindone (*DB: Wilts.* 68:25).
25. *GDB* fols 70*r*. Bechenehilde (*DB: Wilts.* 25:18), 160*r*. Bortone (*DB: Oxon.* 40:1).
26. *GDB* fol. 91*v*. Celeworde (*DB: Som.* 17:5).
27. *GDB* fol. 49*r*. Funtelei (*DB: Hants* 66:1).
28. *GDB* fol. 61*r*. Chingestune (*DB: Berks.* 22:12).
29. *GDB* fol. 102*r*. Mertone (*DB: Devon* 3:5).
30. *GDB* fol. 74*r*. Contone (*DB: Wilts.* 67:63).
31. PASE, 'Thormund 2'.
32. *GDB* fol. 71*r*. Brenchewrde (*DB: Wilts.* 28:8).
33. *GDB* fol. 109*v*. Botreforde, Stotberie, Ocheneberie, Lamesete (*DB: Devon* 17:62–3, 65, 67).
34. PASE, 'Tunbi 2'.
35. *GDB* fols 110*r*. Esseminstre, Matford, 110*v*. Hewise, Aulescome 2nd entry, Wipletone, 111*r*. Alseminstre, 114*r*. Peumere, Hochesham, Chisewic, 114*v*. Wigegroste, Hevetrove (*DB: Devon* 19:8–9, 22, 26, 38, 45; 34:12, 29–30, 52, 56).
36. *GDB* fol. 70*r*. Caldefelle (*DB: Wilts.* 25:8).
37. *GDB* fol. 102*r*. Cliste (*DB: Devon* 3:7); identified as a priest in Exon 132b1.

of Earl Godwine before 1053. The Berkshire Azur (distinguishable from Azur son of Thorth because he was still alive in 1086) was Edward the Confessor's bursar (*dispensator*).

Table 11.14. The Danish lesser thegns of Wessex TRE.

Landowner	Shires	Manors	Hides	Value (£)
Api 'of Timsbury' ¹	Som., Wilts.	2	4	3
Azur the bursar ²	Berks.	2	11	9
Colbrand 'of Creech' ³	Dors.	1	2	2
Colbrand 'of Blackdown' ⁴	Devon	3	1¾	5
Elaf 'of Brown Candover' ⁵	Hants	1	2½	2
Gunnar 'of Avington' ⁶	Berks., Wilts.	2	14	10
Gunni the Dane ⁷	Som.	1	3½	3
Gunward 'of Timsbury' ⁸	Som.	1	5	3
Herki 'of Fareham' ⁹	Hants	1	4	2
Ingulf 'of Batheaston' ¹⁰	Som.	1	3	2
Iolf 'of Delamere' ¹¹	Cornw.	2	1	3
Iusten 'of Hordle' ¹²	Hants	1	5	8
Iusten 'of Sutton' ¹³	Hants	1	3½	4
Ketil 'of Cheriton' ¹⁴	Devon	1	⅛	2
Ketil 'of Clyffe Pypard' ¹⁵	Wilts.	2	4	2
Osgot brother of Almær ¹⁶	Hants	2	3	5
Osgot 'of Welcombe' ¹⁷	Devon	3	1¾	6
Ottar 'of Ford' ¹⁸	Devon	5	2¾	2
Ragnhild 'of Hartley' ¹⁹	Berks.	1	2	2
Sibbi 'of Timsbury' ²⁰	Som.	1	2	1
Stenkil 'of Kingston Bagpuize' ²¹	Berks.	1	5	3
Swein 'of Cucklington' ²²	Som.	1	3½	4
Swein 'of Dogmersfield' ²³	Hants	1	5	5
Thorbert 'of Swindon' ²⁴	Wilts.	1	12	3
Thorgot 'of Black Bourton' ²⁵	Oxon., Wilts.	2	6	5
Thorir 'of Chelwood' ²⁶	Som.	1	3	3
Thorir 'of Funtley' ²⁷	Hants	1	1	4
Thorkil 'of Kingston Bagpuize' ²⁸	Berks.	1	5	5
Thorkil 'of Merton' ²⁹	Devon	1	¾	6
Thorkil 'of Compton Bassett' ³⁰	Wilts.	1	6	5
Thormund 'of Winterborne' ³¹	Dors., Som.	2	7½	5
Toki 'of Brinkworth' ³²	Wilts.	2	6	4
Tovi 'of Okenbury' ³³	Devon	4	2¾	5
Tunbi 'of Sunwood' ³⁴	Hants	1	3	4
Viking 'of Awliscombe' ³⁵	Devon	11	6¼	8
Waltheof 'of Chalfield' ³⁶	Wilts.	1	2½	4
Wigot the priest 'of Clyst St Mary' ³⁷	Devon	1	3	3

Among the thegns there are two striking examples where individual manors had been split in a highly regular way between two or three men with Danish names. As with Osgot, Beorhtric, and

Edmund, discussed above, the neatest explanation is that they were brothers, and thus that what we are seeing in Domesday Book is a rearrangement of property in the second generation of ownership by

a Danish family. The first example is on a Berkshire manor. Abingdon claimed to have bought the whole 20-hide vill of Kingston Bagpuize, in the Vale of the White Horse, in the 970s, but by 1066 controlled only 10 hides, under the name of Draycott.¹³⁰ The other 10 hides was divided equally in 1066 between Stenkil and Thorkil, men with Danish names who shared a final name-element; each had 5 hides, land for 4 ploughs, and 30 acres of meadow.¹³¹ Abingdon further claimed that Thorkil, 'a rich man' (*quidam diues*), with the advice of Earl Harold, commended himself and his land to Abbot Ordric, intending that it should belong to Abingdon in perpetuity, but that after the Conquest, when Thorkil was killed at the battle of Hastings, the Norman Henry de Ferrers took the land for himself in defiance of the abbey's rights.¹³² Abingdon's account of the loss was rewritten in the later twelfth century,¹³³ and in the process evidently confused the two TRE owners, since it was actually Stenkil, not Thorkil, who had the share taken by Ferrers.¹³⁴ The confusion between the two men reinforces the idea that they were brothers. Thorkil more likely than not also held property near by at Willington (Berks.) and Chalgrove (Oxon.), a total of 23 hides worth £21;¹³⁵ that identification would better justify Abingdon's characterization of Thorkil as a rich man.

The other divided estate was Timsbury in north-east Somerset, another vill of 10 hides, divided in a complicated way between three men with the Danish names of Gunward, Api, and Sibbi, so that it was first split into two holdings of 5 hides, one of which continued intact (Gunward), the other being further parcelled into units of 3 hides (Api) and 2 hides (Sibbi).¹³⁶ The division of the meadow and pasture evidently also followed a primary 50:50 split, with Api and Sibbi then dividing their share 2:1,¹³⁷ since Api probably had 26 acres of each to Sibbi's 13 acres; and between them they had 39 acres to Gunward's '40 acres less 1'. Likewise, Api had two thirds of a watermill paying 3s. and Sibbi one third paying 2s., a total for their mill of 5s. or 60d.; Gunward's mill paid 40d., though

Domesday's .XL. is perhaps an error for .LX. The division between Gunward, Api, and Sibbi was thus arranged 5:3:2 for the hidage; 3:2:1 for the meadow and pasture; and (conceivably) 5:3:2 for the mill renders. Exon notes that Sibbi held his manor jointly (*in paragio*) but does not say the same for Api or Gunward, though the absence of the formula is not evidence that they were not so held.¹³⁸ Gunward and Sibbi held nothing other than Timsbury,¹³⁹ but Api had a second, equally modest manor a few miles away in Wiltshire.¹⁴⁰

The Old Danish name Sibbi evidently originated as a short form of Sigbjorn; it does not seem to have been widely used in England, and its absence from both the minor place-names and the later personal nomenclature of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire suggests that it did not reach England during the period of the Viking settlement but rather was first used in the eleventh century, that is, by settlers under Cnut.¹⁴¹ Api is alleged to be an ON byname meaning 'fool', though the occurrence of the name in parallel with Sibbi suggests that we ought at least to wonder if it might instead be a variant of the recorded name Abbi, a short form of Old Danish Abjorn.¹⁴² At any rate, the names Api and Sibbi look like a family pair.

Rich Peasants and Burgesses

Below £2 a year we are at the social boundary between small landowners and rich peasant farmers, a functional distinction between men who mostly supervised the farming operations on their manors and men who regularly got their hands dirty (Table 11.15). Significantly, the Danish names thin out, even in absolute numbers, let alone as a proportion of a very much larger total of individuals. For comparison, the 20 rich Wessex farmers with Danish names (some of which are hybrids or Anglicizations not necessarily denoting Danish ancestry) stand alongside perhaps 30 called Godric alone (one of the commoner English names).

The holdings concerned, although all farm-sized, span a range. At the upper end, Yric's manor

had land for 4 ploughs and in 1086 accommodated a flock of almost 100 sheep. At the lower end, Summerled's property at 'Leigh', tentatively identified as Widcombe Barton Farm in the hills of south Devon, had land for only ½ plough besides 3 acres of demesne woodland, 20 acres of pasture, and 2 acres of meadow; in 1086, it was populated by

a single bordar.¹⁴³ Thorbert 'of Cullompton' might have been a priest, since his holding was attached to Cullompton church, which had been detached from the ancient royal manor of Silverton.¹⁴⁴

Evidence for the names of burgesses in the towns of Wessex is thin but worth bringing into the reckoning of the Danish impact on the region.

Table 11.15. *The Danish rich peasants of Wessex TRE.*

Landowner	Shire	Manors	Hides	Virgates	Value (s.)
Bondi 'of Empshott' ¹	Hants	1		1	10
Bondi 'of Knighton' ²	Hants (IoW)	1		½	3
Brothir 'of Henford' ³	Cornw., Devon	2		2	21
Carlman 'of Clyffe Pypard' ⁴	Wilts.	1	1	1	10
Colswein 'of Horningsham' ⁵	Wilts.	1	½		10
Elaf 'of Newton' ⁶	Som.	1		3	20
Elaf 'of Speccott' ⁷	Devon	1		1	7½
Harold 'of Knighton' ⁸	Hants (IoW)	1		1	5
Ketil (Cytel) 'of Balsdon' ⁹	Cornw.	1		¼	5
Ketil 'of Chetelescote' ¹⁰	Devon	1		1	10
Onlaf 'of Briddlesford' ¹¹	Hants (IoW)	1	1		20
Osgot 'of Spriddlescombe' ¹²	Devon	1		1	7
Summerled 'of Leigh' ¹³	Devon	1			3
Swein 'of Sydling' ¹⁴	Dors.	1	1		10
Thorbert 'of Cullompton' ¹⁵	Devon	1	1		30
Thorbert the huntsman ¹⁶	Hants	1	1		21
Thorkil 'of Cheverton' ¹⁷	Hants	1	1		20
Toki 'of Mudford Sock' ¹⁸	Som.	1	1½		15
Topi 'of Wilson' ¹⁹	Devon	1		1	5
Yric 'of Bulkworthy' ²⁰	Devon	1		1	20

1. GDB fol. 49r. Hibesete (DB: Hants 62:1).

2. GDB fol. 54r. Chenistone (DB: Hants IoW 9:15).

3. GDB fols 109r. Hineford (DB: Devon 17:20), 123r. Maronecirche (DB: Cornw. 5:5:5); the name might be the cognate OE Brothor: Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 208 and note 7; the case for an English name formed from the common noun *brōðor* ('brother') rests on the fact that in both cases the scribe of Great Domesday Book changed an almost unintelligible spelling in Exon (232b3 *Brotdra*, 319b1. *Brorus*) to a form intelligible as that word.

4. GDB fol. 70v. Clive 2nd entry (DB: Wilts. 26:17).

5. PASE, 'Colswein 11'.

6. GDB fol. 93r. Niwetone (DB: Som. 21:3).

7. GDB fol. 115r. Speccote (DB: Devon 36:5).

8. GDB fol. 39v. Chenistone & Done (DB: Hants 1:W1).

9. GDB fol. 123v. Bellesdone (DB: Cornw. 5:7:5).

10. GDB fol. 112v. Chetelescote (DB: Devon 24:27).

11. PASE, 'Onlaf 3'; GDB fol. 53r. Breilesforde (DB: Hants IoW 7:4).

12. GDB fol. 105v. Combe (DB: Devon 15:77).

13. GDB fol. 117v. Lege (DB: Devon 48:12).

14. GDB fol. 79v. Sideline (DB: Dors. 26:27).

15. GDB fol. 104r. Colitone (DB: Devon 9:1).

16. GDB fol. 51v. Otreorde, 1st entry (DB: Hants NF 9:4).

17. GDB fol. 52v. Cevredone (DB: Hants IoW 6:9).

18. GDB fol. 94v. Soche (DB: Som. 21:95).

19. PASE, 'Topi 6'; GDB fol. 108r. Welingedinge (DB: Devon 16:146).

20. PASE, 'Yric 3'; GDB fol. 104v. Buchesworde (DB: Devon 15:14).

At Southampton, three of the nine men named as holding exempt land (*quieta terra*) TRE had Danish names: Eskil the priest, Ketil (identified above as the great landowner Ketil 'of Dibden'), and Tosti (conceivably the earl).¹⁴⁵ For Winchester, the TRE survey of royal lands which survives outside Domesday Book has only seven or eight Danish names among perhaps 265 men paying landgable and brewgale: Colswain (a hybrid Anglo-Danish name), Elaf, Farmann, Gautr, Huni, Stenulf, Toki, and Ulfketil.¹⁴⁶ A useful point of comparison is that only one of some twenty-four moneyers who issued coins at Winchester during Edward's reign had a Danish name, Brand.¹⁴⁷ Winchester might have been central to Cnut's rule over England, but it was far from being a Danish town in the mid eleventh century.

Conclusions

The profiles outlined here offer plentiful but indirect evidence for Danish families as landowners in Wessex in 1066, but only sporadic clues about how and when they had arrived in the region, and what sort of Danish identities lay behind the names. The idea that the great majority had come direct from Denmark in the entourages of Cnut and/or Harthacnut in and after 1016 and 1040 remains impervious to actual proof, though more robust than a mere plausibility, since it is hard to think what other social mechanism could have produced the effects that can be seen.

What can be offered now is a much clearer idea of the numbers of people involved. On current reckoning, eighty-one individuals with Danish names were Wessex landowners in 1066, in the sense of holding most or all of their landed property there. They form a social pyramid, with progressively larger numbers further down the scale of wealth until we reach the rich peasants. On the bands adopted for this study, they comprised four magnates (annual landed income £100 or more), six great landowners (£30–£100), fourteen greater thegns (£10–£30), thirty-seven lesser thegns

(£2–£10), and twenty rich peasants (under £2). A more normative division to correspond with the idea that '5 hides made a thegn' and '40 hides made a noble' would give fifty-seven sub-theonly landowners (under £5), sixteen thegns (£5–£40), and eight nobles (over £40). By either reckoning, the numbers fall away sharply only below an annual value of about £1 a year: there were quite substantial numbers of Danes with single manors worth £2 or £3 a year in 1066.

Eighty-one Danes is a significant number (set against some 210 Norman tenants-in-chief in Wessex in 1086, for example), though no comparison is yet possible with the numbers of English landowners in each wealth band. It is also significant that they permeated every part of Wessex, without signs of concentration around Cnut's capital of Winchester or the housecarls' base at Wallingford. At the very least, they represent scores of families at all levels of landed society which either were Danish or identified themselves as such in their naming practices in the period down to the early years of Edward's reign. Such a wide geographical and social distribution argues against any single episode of 'Danish settlement' in Wessex, and in favour of multiple processes in the acquisition of landed wealth.

The mechanisms through which Danes became landowners in Wessex are mostly not transparent. A few who can be identified with a great deal of confidence can be seen variously as Real Danes, Anglo-Danes, and Adoptive Danes. In theory, many more might have been Anglo-Danes from the Danelaw, newly given lands in Wessex in the eleventh century, but the stock of Danish personal names found in Wessex in 1066 tells against that possibility. It was not really like that of the Danelaw as a whole, even given the known regional variation across the areas settled by the Vikings in the ninth century.¹⁴⁸ Some names, of course, appear in both Wessex and the Danelaw – Auti, Azur, Bondi, Eskil, Grim, Ketil, Swein, Toki – but equally, some of the most prolific Scandinavian names of the Danelaw do not occur at all in the south-west, including all

the names in Arn- (Arnbern, Arnbrand, Arnger, Arngrim, Arni, and Arnketil/Arnkil), Gamel, Grimkil, Ketilbern and Ketilbert, Orm, and Ulfketil/Ulfkil. One might have expected at least some of those very common Danelaw names to be carried to Wessex if significant numbers of the Wessex Danes had been transplanted from the Danelaw.

Most of the Wessex Danes of 1066 were probably Real Danes of the second generation, the sons of men who first acquired land under Cnut. There are three striking examples of manors divided equitably between two or three Danes who were probably brothers: John the Dane and Strang the Dane at Shipton Moyne, Gunward, Api, and Sibbi at Timsbury, Thorkil and Stenkil at Kingston Bagpuize. But family histories must have been almost infinitely varied: other Danish settlers in Wessex will not have left male heirs at all, and some will have assimilated by giving their sons English names. There are plenty of examples of the dilution of Danish identity through the adoption of English personal names at all social levels, from Athelstan son of the staller Tovi the Proud,¹⁴⁹ through the Hampshire thegn Leofwine son of Bondi (fl. 1023),¹⁵⁰ to the Winchester burgess Godwine son of Ketil (fl. 1066).¹⁵¹

The Danish presence in Wessex in 1066 does not look much like the result of a land-grab after 1016. Although there was fighting in Wessex during the final Danish wars of 1013–16, it did not really compare with the Norman campaigns of 1066–71, and the men of Wessex are explicitly said on more than one occasion to have fought for Cnut against Æthelred II and Edmund Ironside. The Danes who came to Wessex after 1016 probably mostly acquired land by peaceful means, principally through marriage into English families and clientage from Cnut and Earl Godwine; in other words, by exactly the same means that shaped the landed estates of native English families.

Besides settlement directly in Wessex, we can see at the upper levels of landed society that Danish families based in neighbouring regions had been

drawn into Wessex during the eleventh century – from the Thames valley (Wigot of Wallingford, Osgot of Hailes, Hacon ‘of Nuneham’), the south-east (Esbern Bigga, Fulki, Eskil of Beckenham), the Mercian shires north of London (Esgar the staller, Aki the Dane), and even further afield (Tonni, Siward Barn). The richest of the outsiders had enough of a stake in Wessex to make a mark and play some part in its affairs. It is interesting, for example, that Esgar the staller’s 30-hide Berkshire manor at Lambourn must already have acquired the unofficial name of ‘Esgar’s *tūn*’ in his time in order for it to have changed its name later to East Garston.¹⁵²

At the highest social levels, some of the processes which planted men with Danish names as landowners in Wessex are perfectly clear. The most prominent secular landowners with Danish names in 1066 were, after all, Earl Harold, his mother Gytha, and his siblings Tosti, Gyrth, and Gunnhild. And the chief Danish newcomer to Wessex in the time of Edward the Confessor was Stigand, who was made bishop of Winchester in 1047; he was from a wealthy Anglo-Danish family in Norfolk and had been a royal chaplain under Cnut.¹⁵³ Harold’s family and Bishop Stigand owed their presence in Wessex to royal patronage.

Royal patronage of Danes in Wessex, and the equally important but barely visible patronage of Earl Godwine, was a continuing process that ran from Cnut’s reign through to Edward’s. It went in parallel with the penetration of other outside influences, in particular the arrival of French landowners which started with the marriage of Æthelred II and Emma of Normandy in 1002. The non-native landowners of Wessex at the start of 1066 also included men like Edward’s cousin the Norman priest Osbern fitzOsbern,¹⁵⁴ his Breton courtiers Ralph the staller and Alfred the marshal, Baldwin fitzHerlwin (perhaps, from his name, a Fleming or Picard), and a sprinkling of lesser landowners.¹⁵⁵

At the upper levels of landed society the biographical profiles which underpin the analysis

offered here provide some markedly different figures for the wealth of individuals from those published by Clarke. There are six names which are altogether new, not identified by Clarke as holding land worth over £40 a year, one of whom (Aki the Dane) had over £100; almost every rich landowner had more land than Clarke reckoned, in some cases very significantly more; Azur son of Thorth has emerged as one of the wealthiest men in England. The adjustments to Clarke's figures involve more than tinkering with the details, because they reveal that the greatest landowners had far wider cross-regional interests than was previously apparent. They show how unusual was the configuration of Mærleswein's landed estate, split equally between the south-western peninsula and the northern Danelaw, with nothing between, and rooted in his acquisition of office; how housecarls like Aki the Dane, Saxi, Azur son of Thorth, and Wigot of Wallingford had very scattered property which made nothing of the boundaries between the traditional English regions; and how landowners like Tholf the Dane and Esbern Bigga were extending their reach from core family holdings into other districts. For Wessex generally, they show that the largest non-royal, non-ecclesiastical, non-comital estates were held by a mixture of insiders and outsiders. All this is suggestive of the growing integration of landed society at supra-regional and even national levels, a process which was propelled forward rather than retarded by the arrival of new Danes in the earlier eleventh century.

Appendix: Two Case Studies

What follows is a more detailed presentation of the evidence in two case studies. It shows more of the working methods of *Profile of a Doomed Elite* than was possible or desirable in the main body of the paper, in particular as a warning that virtually all identifications depend upon shades of confidence rather than certainty. The examples chosen are two Wessex landowners with the strongest claim to be considered new settlers from Denmark

because they both bore the explicit byname 'the Dane'. The first is hedged about with many levels of confidence; the other sits squarely at the more robust end of the scale.

1. *Tholf the Dane*

Very few landowners in England in 1066 were called Tholf.¹⁵⁶ One in Wessex was explicitly given the byname 'the Dane' (*dacus*) at a manor in Hampshire.¹⁵⁷ His forename (normalized in modern onomastic scholarship as ON *þólfr*) originated as a shortened form of ON *þórlufr*, but the two forms were characteristic of different regions in the Scandinavian homeland: the longer form mainly in Iceland, the short form peculiar to Denmark. The spelling Tholf represents a standardized Old Danish form.¹⁵⁸ The name must have come to England from Denmark rather than Norway. The geographical associations of the forename and the 'ethnic' byname thus reinforce one another, underlining the point that Tholf the Dane is likely to have been a first- or at most second-generation newcomer to Wessex.

The identifications made by PDE for the handful of landowners called Tholf bring together the Domesday spellings which have long been recognized as variants of the name with others which Feilitzen assigned (often tentatively) to different head-forms: Teolf (derived by him from CG Theodulf or ON *Þjóðólfr*), Teos (origin obscure), Tous (perhaps ON *Tófi*), and Purs (an ON byname).¹⁵⁹ They also reassign to Tholf a handful of instances where the spellings point at first sight to ON *Tóli* and OE Cuthwulf.¹⁶⁰ Those last two are undoubtedly present in Domesday as the names of persons who were quite distinct from any of the Tholfs, but some of the instances listed by Feilitzen seem rather to refer to Tholf the Dane, for reasons which will become apparent.

The key to identifying Tholf the Dane is the recognition that he was one of the two main pre-Conquest predecessors in the west country of the Norman lord William d'Eu, the other being Ælfstan of Boscombe. Over much of the west

country, William I constructed fiefs for his barons on an antecessorial basis; that is, he assigned *en bloc* to one of his followers the landed estates of one or more pre-Conquest owners, who were termed the Norman's *antecessores*, his antecessors.¹⁶¹ Tholf and Ælfstan were not, strictly speaking, William's *antecessores*, since there was an intermediate Norman landowner, Ralph de Limésy, who acquired the Englishmen's lands but had himself disappeared by 1086. Technically, it was Ralph who was William's d'Eu's *antecessor*. Ralph's tenure will be important later in this discussion. The analysis which follows takes each of the relevant shires in turn, starting with Dorset, where Tholf the Dane's manors were most heavily concentrated.¹⁶²

In Dorset, William d'Eu had two main predecessors, Ælfstan of Boscombe and a man whose name is variously spelled *Tou* (× 2), *Toul* (× 3), and *Tol* (× 2), all of which are readily recognizable as Tholf.¹⁶³ William also acquired one large manor from *Tholi*,¹⁶⁴ a spelling which Feilitzen assigned to the name Toli. This is the only *Tholi* in Dorset, and is most unlikely to be a different person from Tholf. It might represent the spelling *Thol* (phonetically identical with *Tol*) inadvertently given an additional letter, or the spelling *Thou* (phonetically identical with *Tou*) with the minims of the final letter misread as *li* instead of *u*. The metamorphosis of *Tol* (for Tholf) into *Toli* (for Toli) is discussed below in connection with Devon.

In Hampshire, William had the same two main predecessors, Tholf appearing first with his byname as *Tol dacus*, and then in the immediately following entry as *Thol*.¹⁶⁵ Both forms stand unambiguously for the name Tholf, but there is a twist. The first entry originally had a further letter at the end of the name after *Tol*, which the scribe erased by scratching the ink off the parchment. A small part of the erased letter remains visible: it was certainly not an *i*, and looks most like an *a*, making the name as first written *Tola*, which would be the feminine ON name *Tóla*. Interlined above the forename, the scribe has written the masculine byname *dacus*, using an abbreviation mark for the last two letters.

The scribe may have scratched out the final *a* of *Tola* when he added the byname, realizing that he was dealing with a masculine name. In any case, the emendation is a clear reminder that even the expert scribe of Great Domesday Book made some mistakes.

The separate section of the Hampshire folios which deals with the New Forest lists a further manor belonging to William d'Eu, naming his predecessor there as *Coolf*.¹⁶⁶ *Coolf* might be the OE name Cuthwulf, as Feilitzen thought (though the spelling would be eccentric),¹⁶⁷ but the association with William d'Eu raises the suspicion of another miscopying. Three other Cuthwulfs who occur as TRE landowners in southern England can be securely identified, and none of them is likely to have held this particular estate.¹⁶⁸ Might the name instead be a misreading of *Toolf*, a perfectly acceptable spelling for Tholf? Although in contemporary English script the capital letters *C* and *T* looked rather different from one another, some of the Domesday texts which preceded Great Domesday Book are known routinely to have started personal names with lower-case letters, and the graphs for lower-case *c* and *t* were easily confusable. The likelihood is indeed that William d'Eu's predecessor *Coolf* was not some Cuthwulf but Tholf the Dane. That same spelling *Coolf* occurs only once more anywhere in Domesday Book, also in Hampshire, and at a manor on the Isle of Wight just across the Solent from the first *Coolf* in the New Forest.¹⁶⁹ If one of them was really Tholf the Dane, then surely both were. The Wight manor was in the hands in 1086 of King William rather than William d'Eu, but that was because there were no antecessorial grants on Wight: after the Conquest, the whole island was given first to the king's most loyal friend William fitzOsbern, and fell back into the king's hands after fitzOsbern's son Earl Roger de Breteuil rebelled in 1075.¹⁷⁰ Hence its failure to pass into the ownership of William d'Eu is not a barrier to identifying its pre-Conquest owner as Tholf the Dane.

In Wiltshire, William d'Eu's main predecessor

was again Ælfstan of Boscombe; two of the three manors which had not been Ælfstan's were entered with the TRE landowner's name as *Toli*.¹⁷¹ Most instances of that spelling in Domesday Book stand for the Danish name Toli (ON *Tóli*), and Feilitzen naturally assigned the Wiltshire examples to Toli along with the rest. But the same consideration applies in Wiltshire as in Dorset: *Toli* in Wiltshire, like *Tholi* in Dorset, could stand for *Tol* or *Tou*, and thus for *Tholf*. The descent of the manors concerned to William d'Eu is a powerful argument that it did. The argument is reinforced by the fact that although almost a dozen men who really were called Toli can be identified as TRE landowners, none of them had land in the west country.¹⁷² There was in fact another instance of *Toli* in Wiltshire, at Bincknoll, which did not pass to William d'Eu, as well as a *Tous* at Upton Scudamore, a manor which also went to a different Norman; both places and both name forms will be brought into this analysis below.

William d'Eu's fief in Somerset introduces a further complication, but one which casts light on *Toli* of Bincknoll (Wilts.). William's Somerset manors had again mostly belonged to Ælfstan of Boscombe. One of the others, Tickenham, had been held as two manors TRE by *Saulf* and *Teolf*,¹⁷³ and the corresponding entry in Exon shows that they had held jointly, with exactly equal shares of 4 hides 1 virgate apiece.¹⁷⁴ The circumstances suggest the two landowners were kinsmen. As a west country predecessor of William d'Eu, *Teolf* is likely to be yet another spelling of *Tholf*, and not, as Feilitzen suggested, the CG name Theodulf or ON *þjóðólfr*,¹⁷⁵ the first of which is not well attested in pre-Conquest England and the second only once or not at all.¹⁷⁶

We need to return now to Bincknoll. In 1066, the place was in divided ownership: half the 10-hide vill belonged to the great Danish landowner Hacon 'of Nuneham', and half was divided between *Toli's* manor and a holding shared by *Saul* and *Aluwinus*.¹⁷⁷ The last two holdings interlocked and had perhaps recently formed a single unit: *Toli's* was

assessed for tax at 2 hides less 1 virgate (a relatively uncommon way of expressing 1¾ hides) and the other at 3 hides 1 virgate, together making 5 hides. The ploughlands were disposed in almost the same proportions, *Saul* and *Aluwinus* having land for 10 oxen and *Toli* land for 6 oxen (altogether land for 16 oxen or 2 ploughs), a ratio of 10:6 which is close to the assessment ratio (in virgates) of 13:7.¹⁷⁸ This looks like a relatively recent division between *Saul* and *Aluwinus* on the one hand and *Toli* on the other. The shares of *Saul* and *Aluwinus* are not recorded, but conceivably *Saul* had exactly the same number of hides and ploughlands at Bincknoll as *Toli*, leaving *Aluwinus* with a smaller share.

There are good grounds for thinking that *Saulf* of Tickenham (Som.) and *Saul* of Bincknoll (Wilts.) were the same person, a man with the OE name Sæwulf.¹⁷⁹ At Bincknoll, he was co-owner with another Englishman, Alwine. We should further conclude that *Teolf* of Tickenham (who had an equal share with Sæwulf) was identical with *Toli* of Bincknoll (whose share might well have been the same size as Sæwulf's), namely *Tholf* the Dane.

William d'Eu had only two manors in Devon, one of which had belonged to *Toli*. Here the successive drafts of the Domesday materials show that the spelling certainly stands for *Tholf* rather than *Toli*.¹⁸⁰ The Exon scribe had written the name as *Tolus*,¹⁸¹ with the masculine Latin ending which is routine in Exon. *Tolus* was a Latinization of *Tol* rather than *Toli*, since the latter would have been Latinized as *Tolius*, as it was in Little Domesday Book.¹⁸² Exon thus shows how the spelling *Tol* for *Tholf* mutated first into *Tolus* and then into *Toli*, simply through copying. Successive recensions of the Domesday materials in which Latin endings were added to personal names and then taken off is the best explanation of how an original spelling *Tol* became *Toli* in all the instances discussed above.

William d'Eu's other Devon manor had belonged TRE to *Torsus* (*Torssus* in Exon),¹⁸³ a name explained by Feilitzen and his predecessor Redin as an ON byname *purs*.¹⁸⁴ There is, however, no independent evidence that Thurs was ever used as a forename,

and the eccentric form in the Domesday materials is surely better interpreted as yet another variation of Tholf. In this case a plausible explanation is that the sequence *lf* at the end of *Tolf* was misread in some earlier recension as the tall Insular form of the letter *r* followed by a long *s*, Latinized in Exon by doubling the final letter and adding *-us*, and then losing one of the *ss* in Great Domesday.

All these considerations amount to a compelling case for identifying Tholf the Dane as the predecessor of William d'Eu across Wessex, but masquerading in Domesday Book under a great variety of spellings, some of them readily recognizable as the name Tholf, others at first sight standing for different names. That reconstruction is far more plausible than the alternative: that William d'Eu had west country predecessors called Tholf, Thurs, Teolf, and Toli, an unlikely recurrence as William's predecessors of men with names which were vaguely similar and in some cases unusual or even unique.

As already evident, not all the manors which can be assigned to Tholf the Dane passed into the hands of William d'Eu. William, son and eventual successor of Robert, count of Eu,¹⁸⁵ is not known to have been active in England before the 1080s.¹⁸⁶ Ralph de Limésy was explicitly called his antecessor in a Gloucestershire entry¹⁸⁷ and is implied to have been such at several other places,¹⁸⁸ preceding William on estates which had belonged TRE to both Tholf the Dane and Ælfstan of Boscombe. William d'Eu's late arrival in England leaves plenty of time for estates which had originally passed from Tholf the Dane to Ralph de Limésy to have been dispersed, and so not have ended up with William d'Eu.

Four such manors are in question. One was Wellow on the Isle of Wight, discussed above. The second was at Upton Scudamore in Wiltshire, where 3 hides held TRE by *Toli* passed to William d'Eu and 2½ hides held TRE by *Tous* were in the hands in 1086 of Ernulf de Hesdin.¹⁸⁹ The final letter of *Tous*'s name was printed as a short *s* in Farley's great edition of 1783, but the form

of the manuscript letter is not clear-cut; rather, its appearance is intermediate between a long *s* without the normal bulge at mid-point on the left side of the ascender, and an *f* with a tiny and faint cross-bar instead of the usual bold stroke of the pen. It is as if the Great Domesday scribe was not himself sure whether he should be writing *Tous* or *Touf*. The division of this part of Upton Scudamore between William d'Eu and Ernulf de Hesdin left a fragment of it claimed by both men in 1086. Domesday says that Ernulf's manor included ½ hide of William d'Eu's land; the ½ hide appears again in William d'Eu's fief as held wrongfully by Ernulf. The implication is that Upton Scudamore was supposed to be divided in a certain way between William d'Eu and Ernulf de Hesdin, and that Ernulf had occupied more than his share. A division of Tholf's property in the vill may date from some arrangement made between Ernulf and William d'Eu, or earlier between Ernulf and Ralph de Limésy. Ernulf's and William's fiefs overlapped in the west country, especially in Wiltshire, and such exchanges by neighbouring Norman lords were not uncommon in the interests of efficient estate management.

Thirdly, Tholf's Wiltshire manor of Bincknoll, as indicated above, passed to Gilbert de Breteuil rather than William d'Eu. Gilbert has generally been supposed a man of Earl William fitzOsbern who stayed loyal to the king when fitzOsbern's son rebelled in 1075. He had two other manors at Bincknoll,¹⁹⁰ and probably acquired Tholf's smaller share of the vill from William d'Eu (or earlier from Ralph de Limésy) to round off his property there.

Finally, Shepton Montague in Somerset passed from Tholf (*Toli*) to Robert, count of Mortain, rather than William d'Eu. Count Robert's extensive estates in south Somerset appear to have been put together on a geographical basis, as a castlery centred on Montacute, gathering in the estates of different pre-Conquest landholders because of their location, irrespective of who had held them TRE.¹⁹¹

If all the identifications of Tholf the Dane's manors proposed here hold good, then something

can be said about the shape of his landed estate as it existed in 1066, and perhaps even about its development to that point (Table 11.16; Figure 11.2). Tholf's most important shire was Dorset, though Hampshire ran close. His small manors in adjoining shires were really outliers, amounting to no more than 10 per cent of his holdings by value or assessment, though they extended his influence north of Salisbury Plain, north-west to the Bristol Channel, and south-west as far as the Exe estuary. In Dorset, his estates spread across all parts of the shire without any significant concentration, and were valuable enough to make him one of the leading thegns in a shire dominated by the estates of the king, Earl Harold, and the local religious houses.

One notable feature of the estate is an association with towns. Domesday's Circuit II has little information about the urban property of pre-Conquest landowners, but there are some stray references. Tholf's manor of Lytchett Matravers included property in Wareham (Dors.);¹⁹² and his manor of Somborne (Hants) included nine burgesses' houses¹⁹³ which must have been in Winchester.¹⁹⁴ Perhaps as significant is the location of Tholf's furthest flung properties: Tickenham was only 5 miles from Bristol, and neither of his Devon manors stood much further from Exeter, by far the two largest towns west of Winchester. Tholf's acquisition of interests near Bristol and Exeter may well have been deliberate policy, and the manors may have been associated with urban property which was simply not recorded in Domesday Book.

2. *John the Dane*

The second case study is John the Dane, long identified as a pre-Conquest landowner of substance, with an estate scattered across Wessex between the Severn estuary, the Cotswolds, the rolling chalk uplands and infertile heaths of mid and east Dorset, the edge of Dartmoor, and the South Hams of Devon (Table 11.17; Figure 11.2).¹⁹⁵ His byname was rendered in Domesday Book by the other adjective which meant 'the Dane', *danus* rather than *dacus*; it appears once in Great Domesday and once

in Exon, but other manors can be attributed to the same person even when the byname is absent. A confident identification is based on two factors. The first is succession to much of his property after the Conquest by the Norman Matthew de Mortagne,¹⁹⁶ though Matthew failed to secure one of his manors in Somerset, which instead passed to the bishop of Wells (it is assigned explicitly to John the Dane),¹⁹⁷ and two in Devon which fell within Judhael of Totnes's geographically determined fief.¹⁹⁸ The second factor is at least as important: the extreme rarity of the name John in late Anglo-Saxon England. John is the medieval and modern form of the biblical name rendered *Johannes* or *Iohannes* in Anglo-Latin and Franco-Latin texts. It was introduced to England by the Gregorian mission at the end of the sixth century,¹⁹⁹ and was used in clerical circles in the pre-Viking period to a limited extent, probably as a name taken in religion by men christened with OE names drawn from the usual repertoire.²⁰⁰ In the tenth and eleventh centuries it was reintroduced from the Continent as the name of several moneyers, but still did not take hold.²⁰¹ The name John was not used among the English laity before 1066, with one possible but rather uncertain exception: a slave at Faccombe (Hants) freed by his owner in the late tenth or early eleventh century was called *Johannan*.²⁰²

If the name John was rare or unprecedented in English families, it is almost as surprising to find it in use among the Danes in the eleventh century, where it was one of a tiny number of biblical names in limited use.²⁰³ As it happens we can identify as a landowner someone who was almost certainly a close relative of John the Dane and who also bore an unusual name. At Shipton Moyne in the Cotswolds, there was a second manor which mirrored John's and was held TRE by Strang the Dane: each was assessed at 10 hides and worth £15 TRE and £8 in 1086, with an additional 2s. from pasture. In 1086, the two manors had identical numbers of tenant ploughs, villans, and slaves; other details of their resources differed, though not by much. Strang's manor, like John's, passed

Table 11.16. TRE holdings of Tholf the Dane.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Devon	2	0.75	1	6.30	7
Dorset	7	50.00	47	38.65	41
Hampshire	4	38.00	36	36.00	38
Somerset	2	9.25	9	9.50	10
Wiltshire	3	8.25	8	4.65	5
Total	18	106.25	100	95.10	100

Table 11.17. TRE holdings of John the Dane.

Shire	Manors	Hides	Proportion of total (%)	Value (£)	Proportion of total (%)
Devon	2	3.50	7	6.00	11
Dorset	2	14.75	30	15.00	28
Gloucestershire	1	10.00	20	15.00	28
Somerset	2	20.63	42	18.00	33
Total	7	48.88	100	54.00	100

to Matthew de Mortagne.²⁰⁴ There were two other much smaller holdings in the vill,²⁰⁵ but it looks as if the bulk of Shipton Moyne, accounting for 20 hides, had been divided quite recently between John and Strang. Strang's name was formed as a byname from the ON adjective *strangr*, meaning 'strong';²⁰⁶ there is no other recorded instance from Anglo-Saxon England. The suggestion that Strang and John were the same person has nothing to recommend it, but the idea that they were kinsmen is attractive.²⁰⁷ If so, they may have divided what had recently belonged to a single holder. (Their father? A man with interesting ideas about suitable names for his sons?) The essential unity of the two main parts of Shipton is emphasized by the fact that it was clearly unitary as a territory, with a single set of open fields. Its manorial history later in the Middle Ages followed the arrangements of 1086, when Matthew de Mortagne held Strang's part in demesne but had subinfeudated John's part.²⁰⁸

The rarity of John's forename recommends the idea that he was the father of the Northmann son of John who witnessed a purchase of land in

Somerset by Bishop Giso of Wells in 1072; that Northmann has, in turn, been identified with the man of the same name who witnessed Edward the Confessor's confirmation charter of 1065 in Bishop Giso's favour.²⁰⁹ A link between the family and Giso might explain how John the Dane's most valuable manor, Yatton, found its way into the bishop's hands between 1066 and 1086. The acquisition is not documented in Wells's copious archive, but the main source, Giso's so-called *Autobiography*, has been shown to be far from a full and dispassionate account of Giso's activities.²¹⁰

Notes

1. I use the term Danish (denoting culture and society) rather than Old Norse (the name of a group of languages and dialects) because my focus is on social history rather than linguistics, and in preference to 'Scandinavian' because the great majority of all personal names of Scandinavian geographical and Old Norse linguistic origin that were used in England must have come from Denmark.
2. Recent treatments of Cnut's reign pay little attention to the topic: M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in*

- England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London, 1993), pp. 163–74; new edn published as *Cnut: England's Viking King* (Stroud, 2004); T. Bolton, *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and the Consolidation of Power in Northern Europe in the Early Eleventh Century* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 45–60.
3. C. P. Lewis, 'Joining the Dots: a Methodology for Identifying the English in Domesday Book', in *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics: The Prosopography of Britain and France from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century*, ed. K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 69–87.
 4. PASE is at <<http://www.pase.ac.uk>>. Thanks are due to the Leverhulme Trust, which provided funding for PDE; King's College London, which hosted it; Stephen Baxter as the Principal Investigator; my fellow researcher Duncan Probert, who also drew the maps which accompany this paper; and colleagues in the Department of Digital Humanities at King's, who developed the website.
 5. Coded on the database that underlies PASE Domesday as A (beyond reasonable doubt), B (very probable), C (probable), D (more likely than not), and E (balance of probability just in favour); F is used occasionally to mean Failed to identify, exactly balanced between likely and not likely to be the same person.
 6. In what follows Scandinavian names generally are given in spellings which acknowledge how they were used in England, rather than in standardized Old Norse forms. In discussing names, ON means Old Norse, OE Old English, and CG Continental Germanic. Where PDE profiles have been written already, I have normally cited the full discussion under the appropriate PASE reference.
 7. PASE, 'Gunnhild 4'.
 8. PASE, 'Stigand 1'.
 9. O. von Feilitzen, *The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book*, *Nomina Germanica* 3 (Uppsala, 1937), pp. 361–63.
 10. G. Tengvik, *Old English Bynames*, *Nomina Germanica* 4 (Uppsala, 1938), p. 237.
 11. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*.
 12. G. Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire*, *Navnestudier udgivet af Institut for Navneforskning* 7 (Copenhagen, 1968); J. Insley, *Scandinavian Personal Names in Norfolk: A Survey Based on Medieval Records and Place-Names*, *Acta Academiae Regiae Gustavi Adolphi* 62 (Uppsala, 1994).
 13. J. Insley, 'Some Scandinavian Personal Names from South-West England', *Namn och Bygd* 70 (1982), pp. 77–93; 'Some Scandinavian Personal Names in South-West England from Post-Conquest Records', *Studia Anthroponymica Scandinavica* 3 (1985), pp. 23–58.
 14. PASE, 'Manni 4'; L. Marten, 'Meet the Swarts: Tracing a Thengly Family in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *The English and their Legacy, 900–1200: Essays in Honour of Ann Williams*, ed. D. Roffe (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 17–32, at pp. 23–26.
 15. *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 940–1216*, ed. D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and V. C. M. London (Cambridge, 1972), p. 47; PASE, 'Manni 1'.
 16. *GDB* fols 41r. line 8, 48r. Dene (*DB: Hants* 3:1; 45:5).
 17. *GDB* fol. 96r. Wochetreu (*DB: Som.* 25:22); Exon 359b4; *contra* Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 324.
 18. *GDB* fol. 74r. Lavertestocche (*DB: Wilts.* 67:96); *contra* Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 260; E. Björkman, *Nordische Personennamen in England in alt- und frühmittel-englischer Zeit*, *Studien zur englischen Philologie* 37 (Halle an der Saale, 1910; repr. Tübingen, 1973), pp. 47–48.
 19. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 200; *GDB* fol. 82v. Cnolle (*DB: Dors.* 41:2).
 20. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 279; *GDB* fols 73r. lines 7–6 up (*DB: Wilts.* 65:2), 82r. Sudtone, 84r. Mideltone (*DB: Dors.* 40:3; 56:1).
 21. *GDB* fol. 94r. Bagelie (*DB: Som.* 21:61); PASE, 'Cæfel 1': a moneyer at Ilchester (Som.) for the issue dated 1029–36: On-line Early Medieval Corpus of Coin Finds/Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles, no. 1013.0952 <<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/coins/emc>> (accessed 28 Apr. 2014); Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 301.
 22. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 165, 338–39; *GDB* fol. 122r. Lanlaron (*DB: Cornw.* 5.2:10); Exon 252a1.
 23. *GDB* fol. 123v. Bellesdone (*DB: Cornw.* 5.7:5).
 24. *GDB* fol. 112v. Chetelescote (*DB: Devon* 24:27); discussed in *Domesday Book: Devon*, ed. C. and F. Thorn (Chichester, 2 parts, 1985), Part 2, note 24,27.
 25. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 306–307.
 26. Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 105–107 and 276–82.
 27. Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 178 and 179–80.
 28. PASE, 'Cola 2', witness of a lease by the New Minster, Winchester, c.930 (Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1417).

29. PASE, 'Cola 1', 'Cola 3', 'Cola 4', 'Cola 5', 'Colo 1', and 'Kola 1'; the last two should be normalized as Cola.
30. PASE, 'Coling 1-2' (the same person), 'Coling 3', 'Colling 1-2' (the same person), and 'Colthehn 1'; the forms in Coling should be normalized as Colling.
31. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 217-19, 306-307 discussed them under the head-forms unattributed Cola, CG Colbert, CG Colman, unattributed Coluin, ON Kolbeinn, ON Kolbrandr, and ON Kollungr.
32. PASE, 'Cola 2', 'Cola 3', and 'Colswein 1'.
33. PASE, 'Kola 1'.
34. PASE, 'Colbeinn 1' (Chester 1040-2), 'Colbeinn 2' (Derby 1059-62), 'Colbrand 1' (Chester 1046-59), 'Colgrim 1' (Lincoln 979-97), 'Colgrim 2-5' (Lincoln 1023-56), 'Colgrim 7' (York 985-1003), 'Colgrim 8' (York 1017-36), 'Coling 1-2' (Stafford and Tamworth 1056-66), 'Coling 3' (Lewes 1023-9), 'Colman 4-7' (Oxford and Wallingford 1003-40), 'Colswegen 1-2' (Hastings 1059-66), 'Colswegen 3' (Lincoln 1009-17), and 'Colthehn 1' (Chester 1042-4).
35. *GDB* fol. 51r. Trucham (*DB: Hants* NF 3:7), 'notionally' because he held 2½ hides worth 60s. jointly (*in paragio*) with Eadwig; in this and similar cases, PDE divides the hidage and value equally between the TRE holders.
36. *GDB* fol. 93r. Terracolgrin (*DB: Som.* 21:16).
37. PASE, 'Colswein 11'.
38. PASE, 'Colswein 10'.
39. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 296-97.
40. PASE, 'Huscarl 2-3'.
41. *GDB* fols 95v. Strate, 99r. Estrope (*DB: Som.* 25:6; 47:24); PASE, 'Huscarl 6' and 'Huscarl 9'.
42. PASE, 'Huscarl 7'.
43. D. A. E. Pelteret, *Catalogue of English Post-Conquest Vernacular Documents* (Woodbridge, 1990), nos 112, 114.
44. PASE, 'Huscarl 4', 'Huscarl 5'.
45. Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 146-7, where there is only one local example, the other being Roger Huscarl, a justice in eyre in the 1210s who was actually a descendant of the Huscarl who held Eastrip (Som.) in 1066 and 1086: evident from *VCH: Som.* 7, p. 17; *VCH: Mdx* 11, pp. 32-33.
46. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 331-32; Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, does not treat it as a Scandinavian name.
47. *GDB* fol. 373r. col. 1 line 11 up, 373r. col. 2 line 33 (*DB: Yorks.* CE:13, 23).
48. Below, Appendix (John the Dane).
49. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 214, citing T. Forssner, *Continental-Germanic Personal Names in England in Old and Middle English Times* (Uppsala, 1916), p. 54.
50. *GDB* fol. 70v. Clive 2nd entry (*DB: Wilts.* 26:17); the connection is inferred from the structure of Alfred of Marlborough's fief in 1086, in which a constellation of small holdings (including Carlmann's) had been added to a core formed from Carl's pre-Conquest estate: *GDB* fol. 70r.-v. (*DB: Wilts.* 26:1-23).
51. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 390-91.
52. D. N. Parsons, 'Anna, Dot, Thorir ... Counting Domesday Personal Names', *Nomina* 25 (2002), pp. 29-52.
53. Parsons, 'Anna, Dot, Thorir...', pp. 32-33; Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*; Insley, *Scandinavian Personal Names*.
54. A. Williams, 'A Vice-Comital Family in Pre-Conquest Warwickshire', *ANS* 11 (1988), pp. 279-95.
55. M. Townend, 'Contextualizing the *Knútsdrápur*: Skaldic Praise-Poetry at the Court of Cnut', *ASE* 30 (2001), pp. 145-79.
56. M. Biddle and B. Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Danish Royal Burials in Winchester: Cnut and his Family', below, pp. 215-17.
57. *GDB* fol. 56r. lines 20-22 (*DB: Berks.* B:1).
58. N. Hooper, 'The Housecarls in England in the Eleventh Century', *ANS* 7 (1984), pp. 161-76, at pp. 171-72; R. P. Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Berkeley CA, 1988), p. 169; R. Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 107-10.
59. *GDB* fol. 56r. line 3 (*DB: Berks.* B:1).
60. 15 acres was probably not a measurement on the ground but a fiscal assessment equivalent to 3¾ virgates, given that elsewhere in Berkshire 1 acre was evidently a quarter of a fiscal virgate: *DB: Berks.* 17:10-13; 21:19; 52:1 (one assessment of 30 acres, one of 6 acres, and four of 2 acres). They can hardly be fiscal acres of the size in other shires (where 120 acres = 1 hide) because ¼ hide would be expressed as 1 virgate, not as 30 acres; the Berks. folios never use an assessment of ½ virgate, unlike many other shires, and that would be because ½ virgate was expressed as 2 acres.
61. *GDB* fol. 60r. Witeham (*DB: Berks.* 20:3).
62. Cf. D. Roffe, 'Wallingford in Domesday Book and Beyond', in *The Origins of the Borough of Wallingford*:

- Archaeological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. K. S. B. Keats-Rohan and D. Roffe, BAR British Ser. 494 (2009), pp. 27–51, at p. 41; in the same vol., K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, 'The Genesis of the Honour of Wallingford', pp. 52–67, at p. 56; N. Christie and O. Creighton with M. Edgeworth and H. Hamerow, *Transforming Townscapes: From Burh to Borough: The Archaeology of Wallingford, AD 800–1400*, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 35 (2013), pp. 148–50.
63. S. Keynes, 'Cnut's Earls', in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. R. Rumble (London, 1994), pp. 43–88, at pp. 70–74.
 64. F. Barlow, *The Godwins: The Rise and Fall of a Noble Dynasty* (London, 2002), pp. 27–50; E. Mason, *The House of Godwine: The History of a Dynasty* (London, 2004), pp. 31–81.
 65. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 970.
 66. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 960. For the byname, Tengvik, *Old English Bynames*, p. 151.
 67. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 963, 971.
 68. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 955, 961, 969.
 69. As does Bolton, *Empire of Cnut*, pp. 51–55.
 70. *GDB* fol. 79r. Cerne 2nd entry (*DB: Dors.* 26:9).
 71. *GDB* fol. 58v. lines 6–11 (*DB: Berks.* 7:11).
 72. *GDB* fol. 52v. Gatecome (*DB: Hants IoW* 6:4).
 73. *GDB* fol. 274v. Sudberie 2nd part (*DB: Derb.* 6:28).
 74. '5 hides makes a thegn' on Archbishop Wulfstan's tract on status (*Gefyncðu*), widely but wrongly taken to be socially descriptive and current in the eleventh century rather than normative and nostalgic: P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century, Volume 1: Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 391–94; '40 hides makes a noble' on an incidental comment in *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Camden 3rd Ser. 92 (London, 1962), p. 167, translated in *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth, Compiled by a Monk of Ely in the Twelfth Century*, trans. J. Fairweather (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 198–99; both discussed by A. Williams, *The World before Domesday: The English Aristocracy, 900–1066* (London, 2008), pp. 1–10.
 75. P. A. Clarke, *The English Nobility under Edward the Confessor* (Oxford, 1994), p. 253.
 76. PASE, 'Azur 8' (forthcoming).
 77. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1010; *GDB* fols 66r. Dechementune, 68r. lines 20–22 (*DB: Wilts.* 4:4; 13:21), the latter anonymous entry identified as Ditchampton by *VCH: Wilts.* 2, pp. 80, 130 note 4; the small part of Ditchampton retained by the nuns is at *GDB* fol. 68r. Dicehantone (*DB: Wilts.* 13:15).
 78. S. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c.670–1066*, ASNC [Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic] Guides, Texts, and Studies 5 (Cambridge, 2002), Tables 70 and 75.
 79. As Azur son of Toti: Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1425; *Charters of St Albans*, ed. J. Crick, Anglo-Saxon Charters 12 (Oxford, 2007), nos 16 and 16A (pp. 215–20); also discussed by J. Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire* (Stroud and Oxford, 1994), p. 107; S. Baxter, 'The Earls of Mercia and their Commended Men in the Mid Eleventh Century', *ANS* 23 (2000), pp. 23–46, at pp. 25–29 and 35–37.
 80. *GDB* fol. 164r. Udecestre (*DB: Glos.* 1:63).
 81. *GDB* fols 7r. Sentlinge (*DB: Kent* 5:38), 48r. Aclei, Stradfelle, Wergeborne (*DB: Hants* 44:2–4), 60r. Assedone, 60v. Bistesham (*DB: Berks.* 21:3, 7), 72v. Fisertone (*DB: Wilts.* 44:1), 83r. Contone, 85r. Windesore (*DB: Dors.* 51:1; 57:15), 92v. Sutone (*DB: Som.* 19:56), 151r. Grennedone, Sibdone (*DB: Bucks.* 27:1–2), 154v. lines 3–2 up, 157v. Dene ȝ Celford (*DB: Oxon.* 1:6; 24:5), 166v. Alvredestone (*DB: Glos.* 31:2), 225r. Ticemerse, Echentone (*DB: Northants* 25:2–3); *LDB* fol. 57r. Cingam (*DB: Essex* 29:5). This identification differs at several points from that of Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 266–67.
 82. The question is whether the plural in the phrase 'Bondi held these lands freely TRE' referred only to the two parts of the entry in which it occurs or also to the two preceding entries: *GDB* fol. 157v. Scipforde, Fifhide, Dene ȝ Celford (*DB: Oxon.* 24:3–5).
 83. Itchen Abbas was held by the nuns TRE and Hugh fitzBaldric in 1086, when the nuns claimed it; the hundred and shire testified to the nuns' ownership, and King William restored it to the church: *GDB* fol. 48r. Icene (*DB: Hants* 44:1). Hugh fitzBaldric's other manors in Hampshire had come from Bondi, and it is likely that his illegal possession of Itchen came about by appropriating a manor which Bondi had held from the nuns on a lease for lives.
 84. *GDB* fols 49r. Colemere (*DB: Hants* 57:2), 60v. Borgefelle (*DB: Berks.* 21:20), 146v. Mersa, 148v. Hochestone (*DB: Bucks.* 12:29; 17:9).
 85. Keynes, *Atlas of Attestations*, Table 75; Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 1033–34, 1036, and 1041–42.
 86. *GDB* fols 36v. Sande (*DB: Surr.* 33:1), 47v. Sceptune, Estrope (*DB: Hants* 36:1–2), 70r. Adelington, Rode, Tefonte, Crostone, Newentone, Wintreburne, Lediard, 70v. Suindone, Mordone, Wildehille, Opetone, Nortone, Rochelie, Fifhide, Lacoc (*DB: Wilts.* 26:1–15), 97r. Cellewert (*DB: Som.* 34:1).

87. *GDB* fol. 63r. Spone (*DB: Berks.* 54:1).
88. *GDB* fol. 28r. Wapingetorne (*DB: Suss.* 13:14); *VCH: Suss.* 6(1), p. 229; Carl's smaller holdings may represent outliers detached after the Conquest because they lay in a different rape: *GDB* fols 21v. Hertewel, 22v. Bercheham 1st entry (*DB: Suss.* 10:60, 114). Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 317–18, assigns it to the same Carl.
89. PASE, 'Mærleswein 1' (forthcoming). Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 322–24, is inaccurate in detail.
90. A. Williams, *The English and the Norman Conquest* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 22–23.
91. Björkman, *Nordische Personennamen*, pp. 93–94; Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 326; Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, p. 196; Insley, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 300–301 is unconvincing.
92. J. McN. Dodgson, *The Place-Names of Cheshire*, 5 vols in 7 parts, English Place-Name Society 44–48, 54, 74 (1970–97), 4, p. 163.
93. *GDB* fols 38v. Cladford, 48v. Clere, 49r. Anne, Hibesete (*DB: Hants* 1:25; 50:1; 61:1; 62:1), 57r. Soanesfelt, Selingefelle, 58r. Solafel (*DB: Berks.* 1:17–18, 46), 138r. Wesmele (*DB: Herts.* 22:2), 151r. Harduic (*DB: Bucks.* 35:2), 197v. Stantone (*DB: Cambs.* 24:1), 205v. Waltune, 207r. Westune, Sutham, 208r. col. 1 last 3 lines, 208r. col. 2 lines 6–7 (*DB: Hunts.* 14:1; 25:1–2; D:10, 13); *LDB* fols 88v.–89r. Mortuna, 91r. Laghefara, 93r. Wicam (*DB: Essex* 45:1; 51:2; 58:1).
94. Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 337, includes only the first group, neglecting one small manor.
95. C. P. Lewis, 'The Norman Settlement of Herefordshire under William I', *ANS* 7 (1984), pp. 195–213, at pp. 205–209; for Jocelin: L. C. Loyd, *The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman Families*, ed. C. T. Clay and D. C. Douglas, Harleian Society 103 (1951), pp. 33–34.
96. C. P. Lewis, 'The Earldom of Surrey and the Date of Domesday Book', *Historical Research*, 63 (1990), pp. 329–36, at p. 335.
97. *GDB* fol. 150r. Sobintone, Chentone (*DB: Bucks.* 23:7, 12); Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1148: printed, translated, and discussed by F. E. Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs* (Manchester, 1952), no. 104 (pp. 368–70, 522–23).
98. *GDB* fol. 56r.–v. (*DB: Berks.* B:1–9).
99. *GDB* fols 23v. Babintone, 26v. Eldretune 2nd entry, 28v. Bradewatre (*DB: Suss.* 11:15; 12:21; 13:30), 62r. Ledecumbe (*DB: Berks.* 41:2), 71r. Redborne, Manetune (*DB: Wilts.* 28:9, 12), 129r. Herdintone, Coleham (*DB: Mdx* 7:4–5), 150r. Sobintone, Chentone (*DB: Bucks.* 23:7, 12), 158r. Garinges, 159r. Gadintone, 159v. Cestretone, 159v. Cuchesham (*DB: Oxon.* 28:2; 35:1, 18, 31), 169v. Bruurne, Alrelie (*DB: Glos.* 64:1, 3), 239r. Witelauesford (*DB: Warws.* 11:1); Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 356–57 includes a Devon manor which belonged to a different Wigot, omits Wigot's Warwickshire manor, and has two erroneous figures.
100. *GDB* fol. 65v. Ocheborne (*DB: Wilts.* 1:22); *VCH: Wilts.* 2, pp. 199–200; the *Terra Regis* in Wiltshire is carefully arranged to record in succession seven manors once held by King Edward, twelve by the family of Earl Godwine, two after the Conquest by Earl William fitzOsbern, and Ogbourne (evidently therefore from a source different from any of the foregoing), followed by a list of churches: *GDB* fol. 64v.–65v. (*DB: Wilts.* 1:1–23).
101. Williams, *English and the Norman Conquest*, pp. 100–102.
102. *GDB* fol. 158r.–v. (*DB: Oxon.* 28:1, 3–5, 7–15, 17–18, 20–22, 25–29).
103. Sawyer, *Charters*, nos 1030, 1036, 1041–3.
104. *Historia Ecclesie Abendonensis: The History of the Church of Abingdon*, ed. and trans. J. Hudson (Oxford, 2 vols, 2002–7), Vol. 1, pp. 212–15.
105. Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 243–49, reckons £448 but includes some holdings in the hands of Esgar's sokemen, and has one omission and one mistake.
106. *GDB* fol. 62r. Lamborne, Herlei, Estralei (*DB: Berks.* 38:3, 5–6).
107. Taking in all the manors held by the antecessor of Henry de Ferrers, with six more of Henry's manors lacking any statement about TRE tenure, and another four explicitly attributed to Siward Barn which passed to other Normans: *GDB* fols 60v. Greneham, Lachinge, Stanford (*DB: Berks.* 21:5, 11, 18), 157v. Begeurde, Scipforde, Fifhide (*DB: Oxon.* 24:1, 3–4), 169r. Lecelade (*DB: Glos.* 59:1), 242r. Grendone, Bortone, Erburberie, Etendone, Cestedone, Aldulvestreu (*DB: Warws.* 19:1–6), 274r. Branzinctun, Crocheshalle, Chetun, 275r. Cobelei, Nortberie, Duvelle, 275v. Braideshale, Wruenele, 276r. Morelei (*DB: Derb.* 6:5, 14–15, 17, 54, 57, 66, 69–70, 79, 100), 280v. col. 1 line 23, 291v. Lecche, Bonniton (*DB: Notts.* S:5; 24:1–2), 326r. Adelingesfluet (*DB: Yorks.* 17:W1), 337r. col. 1 line 6 up, 353v. Witenai, 369r. Acheseia (*DB: Lincs.* T:5; 21:1–2; 63:7); *LDB* fols 56v.–57r. Stibinga (*DB: Essex* 29:2), 223v. Silingeham, Salthus (*DB: Norf.* 19:18–19); Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 338–9 is not altogether satisfactory; cf. C. Hart, 'Hereward "the Wake" and his Companions', in his

- The Danelaw* (London, 1992), pp. 625–48, at pp. 640–4.
108. PASE, 'Aki 4'.
 109. *GDB* fols 31r.–v. Fernecome (*DB: Surr.* 5:3), 61r. Coleshalle, Celrea, Ordegston (*DB: Berks.* 28:1–3), 72v. Coleselle (*DB: Wilts.* 49:1a), 144r. Thapeslau (*DB: Bucks.* 4:15), 160r. col. 2 1st entry (*DB: Oxon.* 46:1), 167v. Lechantone, Heile, Witetune, Scipetune, Turghedene, 169r. Chenemerforde (*DB: Glos.* 38:1–5; 60:1), 175r. Cumbrintune (*DB: Worcs.* 8:23), 182v. Lecce (*DB: Herefs.* 5:2); *LDB* fol. 93r. Scilcheham (*DB: Essex* 59:1). Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 249–51 is incomplete.
 110. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1408; the charter is regarded as not authentic in its present form, though there is no reason to suspect the witness list.
 111. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 164–65.
 112. A. Williams, 'An Introduction to the Gloucestershire Domesday', in *The Gloucestershire Domesday*, ed. A. Williams and R. W. H. Erskine (London, 1989), pp. 1–39, at pp. 24–25.
 113. Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 351–53.
 114. *GDB* fol. 159v. Lauuelme (*DB: Oxon.* 38:2); Whichford was mistakenly written up in the folios for Northants: *GDB* fol. 227v. Wicford (*DB: Northants* 46:7).
 115. *GDB* fols 33v. Tepestede, 36v. Beddintone (*DB: Surr.* 8:27; 29:1), 129r. Haneworde, Hillendone (*DB: Mdx* 7:2, 6), 149r. Stanes (*DB: Bucks.* 18:1), 168r. Risendone, Horedone, Sapletorne ꝓ Frantone (*DB: Glos.* 46:1–3), 196v. Dochesuorde (*DB: Cambs.* 20:1); *LDB* fol. 429r.–v. Bradeleia, Seilam (*DB: Suff.* 44:1–2); Marten, 'Meet the Swarts', pp. 24–28. Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 355–56, gives an incomplete list confined to the manors which passed to Tosny.
 116. *GDB* fols 82v. Pouertone (*DB: Dors.* 47:8), 93v. Ulwardestone, Ichetoche, 96r. Maneworde, 99r. Havechewelle (*DB: Som.* 21:18, 32; 25:44; 47:13), 102v. Wedicheswelle, Norcote, Bocheland 2nd entry, 106r. Porrige, Oueltone, 106v. Haintone, 108r. Hacome, Taigne, 108v. Stotecome, 109r. Brisham, Cercetone, Corneorde, 110v. Bocheland, 114r. Hantone, 115r. Hancheford, Lobe, 116r. Lavrochebere, 117r. Hela, Hoche, 118v. Wadeham (*DB: Devon* 3:39, 46, 55; 16:36, 44, 70, 152–3, 169; 17:29–30, 48; 19:13; 34:16; 35:20–1; 39:10; 47:1–2; 52:40).
 117. *GDB* fols 95r. Worle (*DB: Som.* 24:1), 100v. Ermentone, Auetone, 111v. Sutreworde, 112r. Godrintone, Stoch, Dunestal and next entry (*DB: Devon* 1:23–4; 23:15–16, 22, 26–7), 122r. Calestoch (*DB: Cornw.* 5:2:12); Esgar's byname was given at Exon 85b1–7. Clarke, *English Nobility*, omits him from his account of men with lands worth over £40 a year, presumably because he failed to identify the Esgar whose two manors passed by exchange to the king with Walter de Douai's antecessor.
 118. *GDB* fols 43r. Warneford, 44v. Avere, Bichetone, 47r. Frodintone, 51v. Depedene, Utefel, 52r. col. 1 line 7, 52v. Side, Cela, Apleford, 53r. Witesfel 1st entry (*DB: Hants* 6:6; 21:4; 22:1; 34:1; NF 9:2, 42; S:2; IoW 1:10; IoW 6:1, 3, 14), 68v. Langeford (*DB: Wilts.* 20:5), 95r. Almundesford, 97v. Witeham (*DB: Som.* 24:19; 36:2). Clarke, *English Nobility*, omits him.
 119. Taking the predecessor of Robert fitzGerald in Hants and Wilts. as the same Tovi whose other manors near by in those shires and W. Berks. were dispersed to other Normans: *GDB* fols 45v. Snodintone, 46r. Rodbrige, 46v. Aclei, Copenore, Bosintone, Sudtune, Funtelei, 49r. Olvestune, 53r. Benestede, Prestetone, Alvrestone (*DB: Hants* 23:39, 66; 28:1–2, 5, 7–8; 59:1; IoW 6:17, 19, 22), 60v. Cerletone, 61r. Taneburne, Mortune, Cerletone (*DB: Berks.* 21:10; 27:1–3), 71r. Poltone, 72v. Wiflesford (*DB: Wilts.* 27:19; 42:7). North Moreton (*DB: Berks.* 27:2) is attributed to an unnamed 'certain free man', but William fitzCorbucion's only other manors outside his Warwickshire group were the other two Berks. manors listed here, both of which came from Tovi.
 120. PASE, 'Esbern 3'.
 121. PASE, 'Fulki 2'.
 122. *GDB* fols 1v. col. 1 line 3, 6v. Hou, Witenemers, 7r. Bacheham, 8v. Stoches (*DB: Kent* D:25; 5:20, 31, 39, 92), 31r. Brunlege 1st entry, 36r. Belgeham (*DB: Surr.* 5:1c; 26:1), 46v. Mapledrewelle (*DB: Hants* 24:1).
 123. *GDB* fols 38v. Esseham (*DB: Hants* 1:18), 71r. Bechenhalle (*DB: Wilts.* 29:2), 159r. Neuham, Secendene, Foxcote, 160r. Meretone, Petintone (*DB: Oxon.* 32:1–3; 53:1–2); this includes two Oxfordshire manors of Richard de Courcy for which no TRE holder is named, as well as the one held explicitly by Hacon.
 124. *GDB* fols 61v. Apletune, Eltune (*DB: Berks.* 33:6–7), 141r.–v. Teuuinge (*DB: Herts.* 36:19), 150r. Cerdeslai, 152r. Hammescle (*DB: Bucks.* 23:10; 46:1), 167v. Iccumbe (*DB: Glos.* 39:4), 226v. Covesgrave, Asce (*DB: Northants* 40:1, 4–5); *LDB* fols 78v.–79r. Hecham (*DB: Essex* 36:6).
 125. *GDB* fols 62r. col. 1 lines 17–23 (*DB: Berks.*

- 37:1), 159*v*. Haneberge (*DB: Oxon.* 38:1), 227*v*. Ceselingeburie, Haiforde, Stowe, Epingeham both entries, Estone (*DB: Northants* 46:1–6), 238*v*. Caldecote (*DB: Warus.* 2:2), 354*r*. col. 1 lines 2–4, 7–9, 17–18, 355*r*. Torp, 355*r*. Wilgebi, Clachesbi, 355*v*. Welle, Chime, 375*v*. col. 1 lines 20–8, 32–5 (*DB: Lincs.* 22:17, 19, 23; 24:24, 37–44, 54–71, 76–7; *CS*:30–1, 33).
126. Addressee of Somerset writs issued by Edward the Confessor, Queen Eadgyth, King Harold, and King William: Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, nos 68–71 (pp. 281–85, 489–91) and p. 575; *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum: The Acta of William I (1066–1087)*, ed. D. Bates (Oxford, 1998), nos 11, 287 (pp. 126–27, 866); witness of Wells charters of 1065 and 1068: Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1042; *Regesta: William I*, ed. Bates, no. 286 (pp. 863–65). There is no reason to think that the same Tovi witnessed royal charters in the period 1042–50 as a thegn (*minister*), or was the *comes* (also meaning ‘thegn’) to whom the king gave 2 hides at an unidentified *Berghe* in 1048, *contra* the implication of Keynes, *Atlas of Attestations*, Table 75.
127. PASE, ‘Wicing 1’.
128. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1474; Pelteret, *Catalogue*, no. 138.
129. *GDB* fol. 44*v*. Seneorde (*DB: Hants* 21:7); *VCH: Hants* 3, pp. 91 and 93.
130. *Charters of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters 7 and 8 (Oxford, 2 parts, 2000–1), Part 2, no. 115; nos 114 and 116–17 are also relevant; *GDB* fol. 59*r*. Draicote (*DB: Berks.* 7:26).
131. *GDB* fols 60*v*. Chingestune, 61*r*. Chingestune (*DB: Berks.* 21:14; 22:12).
132. *Hist. Abingdon*, ed. Hudson, Vol. 1, pp. 222–25.
133. *Hist. Abingdon*, ed. Hudson, Vol. 1, p. clvii.
134. *Hist. Abingdon*, ed. Hudson, Vol. 1, p. 224 n. 511; J. Hudson, ‘The Abbey of Abingdon, its *Chronicle* and the Norman Conquest’, *ANS* 19 (1995), pp. 181–202, at p. 190.
135. *GDB* fols 60*v*. Wibalditone (*DB: Berks.* 21:8), 159*r*. Celgrave (*DB: Oxon.* 35:6). It is not out of the question that he held other manors further afield, but more research is needed.
136. *GDB* fols 88*r*. Temesbare, 99*r*. Timesberie (*DB: Som.* 5:15; 45:6).
137. The calculation depends on amending Sibbi’s 16 acres (in roman numerals .XVI.) to 13 acres (.XIII.), correcting a confusion in reading the minims used to form the two numerals.
138. Exon 140b1, 140b2, 464b2.
139. PASE, ‘Gunward 2’, ‘Sibbi 3’.
140. PASE, ‘Api 2’.
141. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 358; Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, p. 230.
142. Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 1, 11.
143. *GDB* fol. 117*v*. Lege (*DB: Devon* 48:12); *Domesday Book: Devon*, ed. Thorn and Thorn, Part 2, note 48, 12.
144. *Domesday Book: Devon*, ed. Thorn and Thorn, Part 2, note 1,7.
145. *GDB* fol. 52*r*. col. 1 lines 6–10 (*DB: Hants* S:2).
146. ‘The Winton Domesday’, ed. and trans. F. Barlow, in *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, ed. M. Biddle, Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford, 1976), pp. 1–141, at pp. 32–68 (Survey I, nos 20, 37, 102, 108, 185, 231, 234, and 264); in the same volume, O. von Feilitzen, ‘The Personal Names and Bynames of the Winton Domesday’, pp. 143–229, at pp. 180 and 184–85, reckoned ten Scandinavian names but mistakenly included two from the later survey (Porsteinn, nos 75, 180, and 289; and Ulfr, nos 131 and 229) and counted 311 persons altogether by reckoning each occurrence of a name as standing for a separate person; because the later survey records many more bynames it shows that burgesses often had multiple holdings, and there is no reason to suppose that the same was not already true in 1066.
147. Based on an analysis of On-line Early Medieval Corpus of Coin Finds/Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles <<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/coins/emc>> (Dec. 2013).
148. J. Insley, ‘Regional Variation in Scandinavian Personal Nomenclature in England’, *Nomina* 3 (1979), pp. 52–60.
149. Williams, *World before Domesday*, pp. 28–29.
150. Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 960.
151. ‘Winton Domesday’, ed. Barlow, p. 48 (I, no. 92).
152. *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names, based on the collections of the English Place-Name Society*, ed. V. Watts, (with) J. Insley and M. Gelling (Cambridge, 2005), p. 204; M. Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England* (Chichester, 2nd edn, 1988), p. 124.
153. PASE, ‘Stigand 1’; M. F. Smith, ‘Archbishop Stigand and the Eye of the Needle’, *ANS* 16 (1993), pp. 199–219.
154. S. Baxter and C. P. Lewis, ‘Comment identifier les propriétaires fonciers du *Domesday Book* en Angleterre et en Normandie? Le cas d’Osbern fitzOsbern’, *Penser les mondes normands médiévaux*, ed. D. Bates and P. Bauduin (Caen, forthcoming 2015).

155. C. P. Lewis, 'The French in England before the Norman Conquest', *ANS* 17 (1994), pp. 123–44.
156. PASE, 'Tholf 2–7' (Tholf 2 is the subject of discussion here).
157. *GDB* fol. 47r. Sumburne (*DB: Hants* 32:1).
158. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 389–90; Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names*, pp. 295 and 317.
159. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 382–83, 388, 389–90, and 397.
160. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 220, 386. For some of the complexities involved in unravelling the Domesday forms of personal names see esp. C. Clark, 'Domesday Book – a Great Red-Herring: Thoughts on Some Late-Eleventh-Century Orthographies', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. C. Hicks, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 2 (Stamford, 1992), pp. 317–31.
161. R. Fleming, *Kings and Lords in Conquest England* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 109–14.
162. Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 350 ('Toli the Dane'), is wholly inadequate.
163. *GDB* fols 80v. Bradeford, Bleneford, Suere, Terente, 82r. Stoches, Candel (*DB: Dors.* 34:2, 6 (twice), 8, 12, 14–15).
164. *GDB* fol. 80v. Lichet (*DB: Dors.* 34:5).
165. *GDB* fol. 47r. Sumburne, Dene (*DB: Hants* 32:1–2).
166. *GDB* fol. 51r. Rodedic (*DB: Hants* NF 4:1).
167. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 220.
168. PASE, 'Cuthwulf 14', 'Cuthwulf 15', 'Cuthwulf 16'.
169. *GDB* fol. 52r. Welige (*DB: Hants* IoW 1:4).
170. B. J. Golding, 'An Introduction to the Hampshire Domesday', in *The Hampshire Domesday*, ed. A. Williams and R. W. H. Erskine (London, 1989), pp. 1–27, at pp. 18–19.
171. *GDB* fol. 71v. Tollard, Opetone (*DB: Wilts.* 32:16–17).
172. PASE, 'Toli 2', 'Toli 4–13'.
173. *GDB* fol. 96v. Ticheham (*DB: Som.* 26:8).
174. Exon 438b1.
175. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, pp. 382–83.
176. The only Theodulfs currently (June 2015) in PASE are the archbishop of Orléans, d. 821 ('Theodulf 1'); a moneyer in the period 939–55 ('Theodulf 3+5+6'); a moneyer at Lincoln in the period 1003–9 ('Theodulf 4'); and the recipient of a grant of 5 hides from King Æthelred II in 1012 ('Theodulf 2'). The moneyers probably had the CG name (Veronica Smart, 'Economic Migrants? Continental Moneyers' Names on the Tenth-Century English Coinage', *Nomina* 32 (2009), pp. 113–56, at p. 154); Æthelred's man (*fidelis homo*: Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 929; *Charters of Burton Abbey*, ed. P. H. Sawyer, Anglo-Saxon Charters 2 (Oxford, 1979), no. 36) is more likely to have had the Scandinavian name.
177. *GDB* fol. 71r. Bechenhalle and two following entries (*DB: Wilts.* 29:2–4).
178. If the division was based on hidage, then there was no closer way of sharing out the ploughlands.
179. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 355.
180. *GDB* fol. 111v. Witestan (*DB: Devon* 22:2).
181. Exon 459a2.
182. *LDB* fol. 59r. Keventuna (*DB: Essex* 30:17).
183. *GDB* fol. 111v. Poldreham (*DB: Devon* 22:1); Exon 457a1.
184. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 397; M. Redin, *Studies on Uncompounded Personal Names in Old English*, Inaugural Dissertation (Uppsala, 1919), 37.
185. J. A. Green, *The Aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 28, 31, 93, 149, 274.
186. When he first appears in royal charters: *Regesta: William I*, ed. Bates, nos 21, 123, 146, 156.
187. *GDB* fol. 166v. Alvredestone (*DB: Glos.* 31:2).
188. *GDB* fols 80v. Bleneford (*DB: Dors.* 34:6), 162r. col. 2 lines 27–33, 166v. Wigheiete, 167r. Sciptone, Culcortorne (*DB: Glos.* W:16; 31:4, 9–10).
189. *GDB* fol. 70r. Opetone (*DB: Wilts.* 25:23).
190. *GDB* fol. 71r. Bechenhalle and two following entries (*DB: Wilts.* 29:2–4).
191. *GDB* fol. 93r. Biscopestone (*DB: Som.* 19:86); G. A. Loud, 'An Introduction to the Somerset Domesday', in *The Somerset Domesday*, ed. A. Williams and R. W. H. Erskine (London, 1989), pp. 1–31, at p. 23.
192. *GDB* fol. 80v. Lichet (*DB: Dors.* 34:5).
193. *GDB* fol. 47r. Sumburne (*DB: Hants* 32:1).
194. Rather than some nascent borough at Stockbridge, especially since the manor seems to have been Upper Somborne (in King's Somborne), not Stockbridge itself: *VCH: Hants* 4, p. 474, *contra Domesday Book: Hampshire*, ed. J. Munby (Chichester, 1982), note 32,1.
195. A. Williams, 'Introduction to the Dorset Domesday', *VCH: Dors.* 3, pp. 1–60, at p. 32; Williams, 'Introduction to Gloucestershire Domesday', p. 26; PASE, 'John 37'. The list of his estates provided by Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 316, omits those in Devon, does not separate his tenants' holdings, and has three errors in the figures.
196. *GDB* fols 82v. Meleburne, Ogre (*DB: Dors.* 46:1–2), 98r. Clivedone (*DB: Som.* 44:1), 170r. Scipetone 2nd entry (*DB: Glos.* 73:2).
197. *GDB* fol. 89v. Latune (*DB: Som.* 6:14).

198. *GDB* fol. 109r: Bovi, Torlestan (*DB: Devon* 17:22,33).
199. PASE, 'John 5', one of the monks who travelled with Augustine.
200. *E.g.* PASE, 'John 18' (John of Beverley, bishop of York, d. 721) and 'John 19' (the priest to whom Bede dedicated his metrical *Life of Cuthbert*); most of the other Johns currently in PASE were not native Englishmen.
201. Currently entered in PASE as 'Iohan 1–7'; Smart, 'Economic Migrants?', pp. 145–46.
202. PASE, 'Johanna 1'; Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1539; *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, ed. and trans. D. Whitelock (Cambridge, 1930), no. 3 (pp. 10–15, at p. 12): the spelling is eccentric if the name was intended as *Iohannes*.
203. *Nordiskt runnamslexicon*, s.n. Ióhan (Iön) <<http://www.sofi.se/SOFIU/runlex>>, consulted 24 Nov. 2013; L. Peterson, 'Research Report: Dictionary of Proper Names in Scandinavian Viking Age Runic Inscriptions', in *Viking and Norse in the North Atlantic: Select Papers from the Proceedings of the Fourteenth Viking Congress, Tórshavn, 19–30 July 2001*, ed. A. Mortensen and S. V. Arge, *Annales Societatis Scientiarum Færoensis Supplementum* 14 (Tórshavn, 2005), pp. 371–74, at p. 372.
204. *GDB* fol. 170r: Scipetone 1st entry (*DB: Glos.* 73:1).
205. *GDB* fols 167r: Sciptone, 170r: Scipetone 3rd entry (*DB: Glos.* 31:9; 73:3).
206. Feilitzen, *Pre-Conquest Personal Names*, p. 376; Strang and the cognate OE adjective *streng* appear used as personal names in the place-names Strensham (Worcs.) and Stringston (Som.): *Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names*, ed. Watts, pp. 586 and 587.
207. Williams, 'Introduction to Gloucestershire Domesday', p. 26.
208. *VCH: Glos.* 9, pp. 249–55.
209. S. Keynes, 'Giso, Bishop of Wells (1061–88)', *ANS* 19 (1996), pp. 203–71, at p. 247; 1065 charter is Sawyer, *Charters*, no. 1042; 1072 charter printed and translated by F. H. Dickinson, 'The Sale of Combe', *Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 22 part II (1876), pp. 106–13, calendared by Pelteret, *Catalogue*, no. 56.
210. Keynes, 'Giso', pp. 221–26 and 254–68.

Danish Royal Burials in Winchester: Cnut and his Family¹

Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjolbye-Biddle[†]

The Danish royal burials in Old Minster

Following his death at Shaftesbury in 1035, King Cnut was brought 70 km (43 miles) to Winchester and buried in the Anglo-Saxon cathedral church known as Old Minster (Figures 12.1–2;

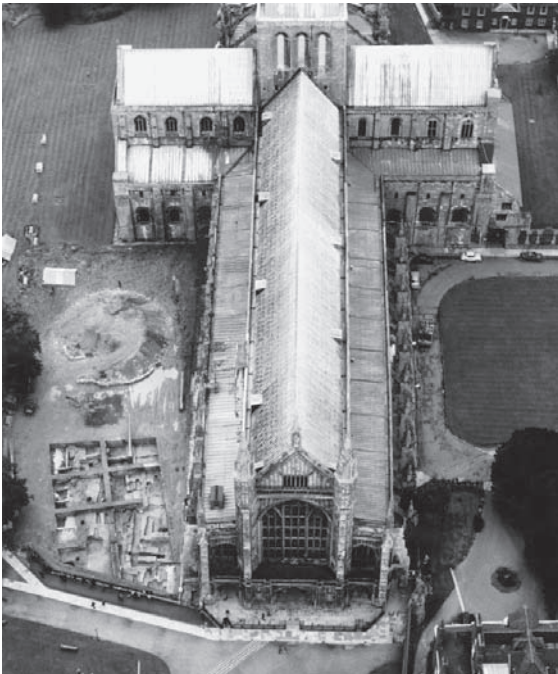


Figure 12.1. Winchester Cathedral from the air. The excavation of the Anglo-Saxon Old Minster in progress, 1966, looking east. (Photograph R. C. Anderson. © Winchester Excavations Committee)

Tables 12.1–2). Seven years later in 1042, his son Harthacnut died at Lambeth outside London and was brought 100 km (62 miles) to Winchester and buried in Old Minster ‘with King Cnut his father’. In 1049, Earl Beorn, son of Earl Ulf and Cnut’s sister Estrith, and brother of the reigning Danish king, Swein Estrithson (1047–76), was murdered and buried at Dartmouth or Axmouth in Devon, and his body later dug up and brought 130 km (81 miles) to Winchester and buried in Old Minster ‘with King Cnut his uncle’. In 1052, Emma the Queen-Mother died in Winchester and was buried in Old Minster ‘with King Cnut’, her husband.² To these, for special dynastic and political reasons, Edmund Ironside, king of England in 1016, may belong: Cnut seems to have called Edmund his ‘brother’ and may in 1032 have brought his body or part of it the 100 km (62 miles) from Glastonbury to Old Minster.³

Harthacnut was the last king to be buried in Old Minster, and may be the only one whose body rests undisturbed in the present cathedral (Figures 12.21 and 12.22). With the accession in 1042 of his half-brother, Edward, later known as the Confessor, the Danish royal line in England came to an end. The burial of Queen Emma, Edward’s mother, in Winchester in 1052 respected the custom of Cnut’s house,⁴ but when Edward himself died in 1066 he was buried at Westminster, in the church he had built.

Within a few years Old Minster had come to contain a close-knit group of four burials of the Danish royal house. Except in one respect, the

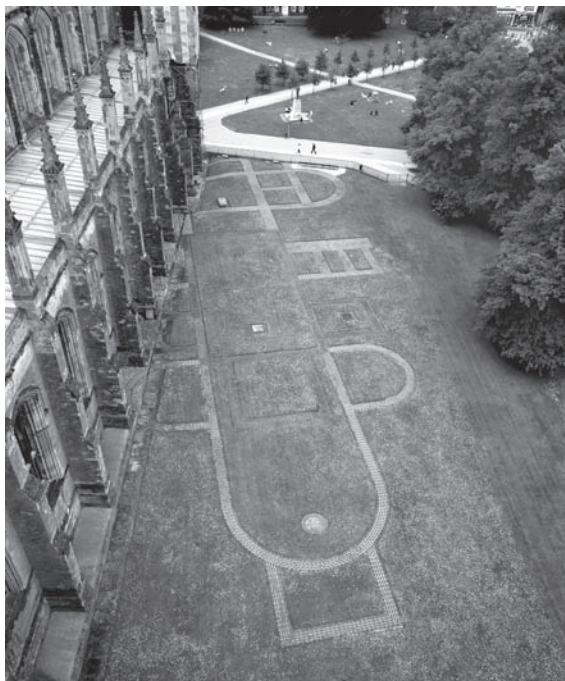


Figure 12.2. Looking west down the axis of the plan of Old Minster laid out in modern brickwork along the north side of the nave of Winchester Cathedral. The Danish royal graves were probably in the large eastern apse in the foreground. (Photograph © John Crook)

written sources tell us no more about these burials or where they lay. But the Old English prepositions used in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to describe the burials of Harthacnut, Beorn and Emma in relation to the burial of Cnut, *wið* and *mid*, 'with', and the Latin *iuxta*, 'next', used by John of Worcester (perhaps translating from Old English), show that these four graves were close together, probably side by side or head to toe.

Over a century earlier, a remarkably similar group of English royal burials had been placed in New Minster, the church founded by King Edward the Elder (899–924) and built in c.901–93 immediately to the north of Old Minster (Figure 12.3; Table 12.2).⁵ When New Minster was complete, Edward had the body of his father, King Alfred (871–99), translated from Old Minster into New Minster.⁶

In 902, Queen Ealhswith, Alfred's widow, was buried beside her husband.⁷ In 924, Edward died at Farndon-on-Dee in Cheshire and was brought the vast distance of 325 km (202 miles) to Winchester where his body was 'buried royally in New Minster'; within days Edward's son Ælfweard, dying at Oxford, was buried 'where his father lies' (*sepultus est ubi et pater illius*); and it was probably here too that Æthelweard, Edward's brother, had been buried a few years before.⁸ This English royal group, father, mother, sons, and grandson, lying together in New Minster on the right side of the altar in and perhaps around a tomb-structure (*sacellum*) constructed by Edward for his father Alfred,⁹ may have been the example which more than a century later led to the creation in the adjacent Old Minster of a burying place for the Anglo-Danish royal house.¹⁰

To reach any further understanding of the possible location of the burials of Cnut and his family within Old Minster we are dependent on archaeology. Old Minster, the Anglo-Saxon cathedral church of the ancient see of Winchester, was demolished in 1093–4 following the construction and dedication of the east end and crossing of the new Norman cathedral built by Bishop Walkelin in the years since 1079.¹¹ Excavations in 1962–9 led to the discovery of Old Minster lying diagonally to the north and partly below the Norman nave of Winchester Cathedral (Figures 12.1–4). Before the start of demolition in the summer of 1093 there stood in this area of Winchester a remarkable complex of ancient and venerated buildings: a royal residence, perhaps going back to the fifth century; Old Minster, the cathedral, by now 445 years old; New Minster, constructed in c.901–3, the church of Alfred's new *burh*; and towering over these ancient structures the east end of the new cathedral, its nave soon to extend west over part of Old Minster (Figure 12.3).

The ancient core of Old Minster was a square-ended, cruciform, church built c.648. This first church was changed and enlarged over the following centuries, but it was that forceful genius, Æthelwold, bishop from 963 to 984, who designed and partly built the wonderful works completed in c.992–4

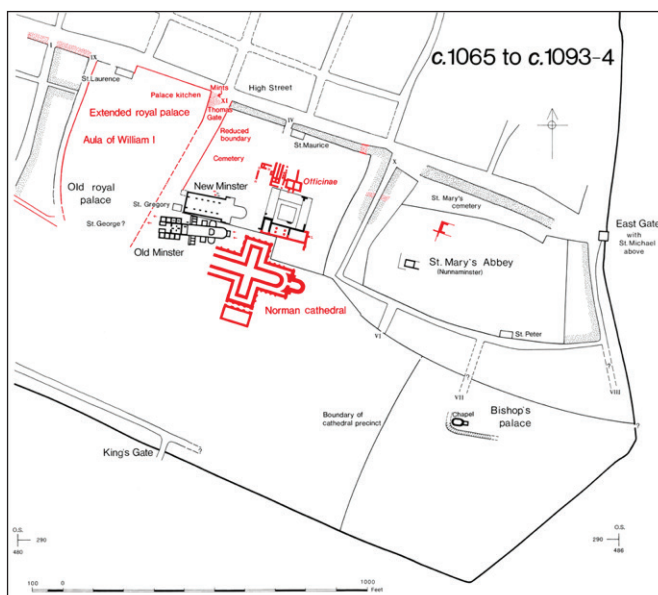


Figure 12.3. Winchester in 1093: Old Minster, New Minster, and the east end of the new Norman cathedral, as they were on 15 July 1093, the day before the start of the demolition of Old Minster. (Drawn by Nicholas Griffiths. © Winchester Excavations Committee)

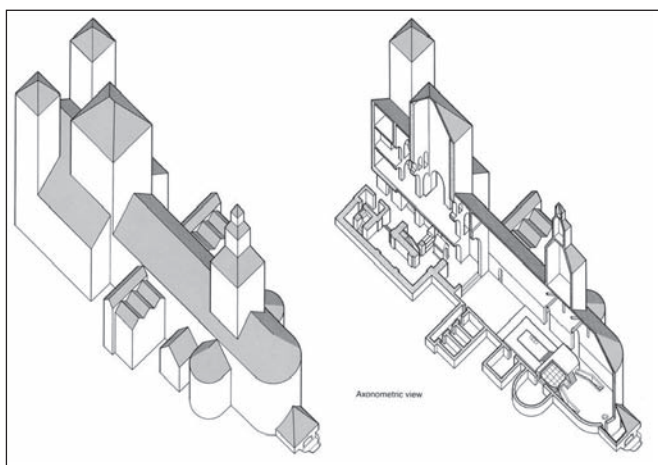


Figure 12.4. Old Minster: reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral as it was between 992–4 and 1093, axonometric view, looking north-west. The Danish royal graves were probably in the eastern apse, behind the high altar. (Drawn by Simon Hayfield. © Winchester Excavations Committee)

(Figure 12.4). In its final form Old Minster was 73.5 m long. At its west end there was a multi-storied work with three towers and a ground-level crypt containing a new shrine built around the site

of the tomb of St Swithun (bishop, 852–63).¹² This westwork was dedicated in 980. To the east lay the ancient nave, with ranges of chapels added to north and south in the early tenth century.

Bishop Ælfheah (984–1006; archbishop of Canterbury, from 1006; murdered by the Danes at a drunken party on 19 April 1012)¹³ continued the works begun by Æthelwold, raising the floor of the nave with a wide flight of steps leading to the high altar, and moving the altar so that it stood above a crypt created in the east porticus of the old church. Beyond the high altar stretched a long eastern apse, three times as long as its predecessor. Inside the east end there was a deep stone-lined well, and at the crown of the apse an external crypt. A five-staged tower was constructed above the high altar, buttressed by the lateral apses added to north and south.

The works of Æthelwold and Ælfheah had enormously enlarged the floor area of Old Minster. The church now had four towers, three crypts, three apses, at least twenty-four smaller chapels, an elaborate baptistery, and a splendid nave in which large steps led the eye and person to the raised platform of the high altar. This exciting building had floors paved with stone and polychrome-glazed relief-decorated tiles, walls covered in pink plaster with painting, stone sculptures, windows glazed with patterns of coloured and perhaps painted glass. The great bells of the central tower, and a booming organ, said to require seventy strong men to blow it and two to play, added a tonal dimension, enhanced by the antiphonal singing of the choirs.¹⁴

The finds derived from the demolition of the eastern apse showed that this part of the new church was not extensively plastered, but some of the richest fragments of sculpture were found in the infill of the external crypt.¹⁵ These included a unique sculptured block which has been identified as part of a narrative frieze, a ‘Bayeux tapestry’ in stone (Figure 12.5).¹⁶ The carving appears to show parts of two scenes, the subjects divided here, as sometimes on the Bayeux Tapestry, by the first or last figure of a scene turning its back on the scene which precedes or follows.¹⁷ A mailed warrior walks left into a scene beyond the surviving stone, his back turned to the scene on the right which shows a bound man lying on the ground with a dog-like animal on top of him. At



Figure 12.5. Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture from Old Minster showing what may be the episode of Sigmund and the Wolf from Volsunga Saga. This scene may have been part of a monumental narrative frieze celebrating the shared origins of England and Denmark, erected around the interior or exterior of the east end of Old Minster during the reign of King Cnut. Cnut's marriage to Emma, the widow of King Æthelred of England, personified the union of the two kingdoms. (Photograph R. C. Anderson. © Winchester Excavations Committee)

least two blocks of similar size would be needed to the right to complete the figure of the bound man, and the mailed warrior can only have been one of several figures in a scene extending to the left over two or more blocks. At least five blocks of similar size would thus probably have been needed to complete the scenes partly preserved, indicating a minimum length of 2.6 m. The figures on this block are not complete in themselves: portions of the top and bottom of each scene must have been shown on blocks above and below, the whole about

1.4 m high. There are only a few purposes for which a carved panel at least 2.6 m long and possibly 1.4 m high can have been intended: as decoration for a free-standing monument, as part of a narrative frieze round the interior or exterior of Old Minster, or as the decoration of a free-standing screen. The size of the scheme indicated by the surviving block seems too large at this date even for a royal tomb.¹⁸ The most likely explanation is that the stone was part of a narrative frieze on an interior or exterior wall face.

The distinctive feature of the iconography is the dog or wolf with its tongue at or in the open mouth of the bound man, an action made possible by the man's jaw being held down by the animal's paw. The scene may be from some lost or unidentified story, such as a saint's life, but an incident in Volsunga Saga provides a close parallel, as was suggested when the stone was first published.¹⁹ Sigmund and his nine brothers were clamped by their legs into a large pair of stocks in the forest. For nine successive nights an old, large, and evil-looking she-wolf appeared and killed and ate one of the nine brothers until Sigmund alone remained. On the tenth night Signy, Sigmund's twin sister, sent her trusted servant (*trúnadarmann*) to smear honey on Sigmund's face and to put some of it in his mouth. When the wolf came she sniffed the honey, licked Sigmund's face

and then thrust her tongue into his mouth. He took heart and bit into the wolf's tongue. At this she gave a violent jerk and strained backwards, pressing hard with her paws against the stocks which as a result split apart. But he held on so firmly that the wolf's tongue was torn out by the roots, and that finished her.²⁰

The armed figure to the left might be Signy's *trúnadarmann*, but some earlier episode could be represented. The essential point is that the wolf is at the face of the bound man in precisely the way the saga specifies – licking or thrusting, and not biting. Although the only manuscript of Volsunga Saga dates from c.1400, references to the Volsung legend in Beowulf, Widsith, and Waldere in Old English, and in Eiríksmal in Old Norse, show that the story was known at the latest by the tenth century and in some form as early as the early eighth century.²¹

Since the royal houses of Wessex and Denmark claimed descent from the same ancestor, Scyld, and thus shared a tradition in which Sigmund had played a major part, this stone could have been an element in a narrative frieze telling the story of the Danish and English royal houses and celebrating their shared origins.

This leads us directly to the question of date. The archaeological evidence provides a *terminus ante quem* of 1093–4. Since the eastern part of Old Minster, in the eastern extremity of which the 'Sigmund' stone was found, was not begun until after c.980 and was dedicated in 992–4, the stone can be dated to the century between c.980 and 1093–4. Its condition shows that the carving was not new when discarded and it must therefore be related to the decoration of the building being demolished. If the suggestion that the stone formed part of a narrative frieze celebrating the shared origins of England and Denmark is accepted, a date in the reign of Cnut after his marriage in 1017 to Emma, the widow of Æthelred, is indicated.

There remains the question of whether Cnut would have permitted the display in the cathedral church of an incident from the pagan past. But it is the heroic and not the pagan which matters here. The appearance of Sigurd and Weland on pre-Conquest Christian carvings from northern England has been seen as an attempt to redeem pagan ancestors. This too is the period when all the surviving manuscripts containing heroic stories of the pagan past, such as *Beowulf*, or extensive references to that past, as in the poem *Deor*, were written. The heroic poem *Beowulf* demonstrates a living acquaintance with the saga of Sigmund, episodes of which appear in lines 867–900.

If the Winchester stone was part of a narrative frieze recording the shared ancestry of the English and Danish royal houses in the detail indicated by the inclusion of so slight if dramatic an incident as Sigmund and the wolf, the total length must have been very great. On the supposition that it was set on the interior walls of the eastern arm of Old Minster, east of the lateral apses, a length of 24.4 m

is possible. There is nothing to show that it was not even longer, for it could have run around an even greater length of the exterior of the building, or have been in more than one register, whether inside or out. The similarities of the Winchester frieze to the Bayeux Tapestry may therefore have included length, for it should be remembered that the Tapestry was over 70 m long.²² The earliest English reference to an actual narrative hanging belongs to the late tenth century, showing that a tradition of secular narrative depiction existed in England before the proposed date of the Winchester sculpture.²³

To sum up: the Winchester carving (Figure 12.5) has been tentatively identified as part of a very long frieze depicting the shared traditional history of England and Denmark, a history symbolically united in the marriage in 1017 of Cnut to Ælfgifu-Emma, widow of the English king Æthelred II.²⁴

If this interpretation is correct,²⁵ and if the frieze was set up in the east end of Old Minster, as the find-spot of the carving suggests, this is the most likely location for the burial of Cnut and his family.²⁶ The great length of the new apse (Figures 12.2–4) would have provided more than enough space and an architectural setting of some magnificence. The space may also have been relatively unencumbered. Since the completion of the east end in 992–4, there had been no royal burials in Old Minster. Three bishops had died in office, and had presumably been buried in their cathedral, perhaps in the proximity of St Swithun in the westwork. The burials of Alfred and his family in the eastern part of New Minster, to the right of the high altar, provides an obvious parallel for the burial of Cnut's family in the east end of Old Minster, and may even have influenced Cnut and Emma's choice.²⁷ As we shall see, the remains of Cnut and his family probably occupied a similar position in the new Norman cathedral.

Two inscribed stones cast a direct light on these Anglo-Danish royal burials. The only rune-stone from Winchester was part of a grave-marker found reused in the tower of St Maurice's church. Only a fragment of the inscription survives, but enough to suggest that it was Danish-inspired and dates from

the time of Cnut or thereabouts.²⁸ It is impossible to know where it originally stood. Not so with the second inscription, on a coped rectangular grave-cover found in position over the grave of a young man immediately south-east of the east apse of Old Minster.²⁹ Along the length of the cover ran an inscription in Old English:

+HER LI[Ð] GV[M]N[L] [:] EOR[L]ES FEOLAGA

+ Here lies Gunni, the earl's companion.

Feolaga (Modern English, 'fellow') is an anglicization of the Old Norse *félagi*, and Gunni is a name of Old Norse origin. There has always been some uncertainty whether *eorles* was a noun, 'the earl's', or a proper name, 'Earl's'. The possibility that the Danish royal burials lay in the east apse of Old Minster suggests that Gunni may have been a companion of Earl Beorn and had accompanied him as closely in death as he had in life.

The Danish Royal Burials in the Norman Cathedral: the 'Traditional' View

The monks left Old Minster in 1093 and moved into the newly completed east end of the Norman cathedral (Figure 12.3). On 15 July, the Feast of St Swithun, they went in procession back to Old Minster. They removed the *feretrum*, the reliquary, of St Swithun, carried it to the new church, and placed it in an honourable setting (*honorifice collocaverunt*), probably at the crown of the new apse, immediately behind the high altar. The demolition of the old church began the next day and the following year relics of St Swithun and many other saints (*aliorumque plurimorum sanctorum*) were found under the high altar.³⁰

The most important burials were probably moved directly into the new Norman cathedral before demolition began. Four of the burials in stone coffins within the former westwork, and one outside it, were, however, left in position. Following the building of the nave, these coffins were displayed in the open air in a 'memorial court' focused on a monument over the site of St Swithun's original grave.³¹ This

'memorial court' was abandoned during the second half of the twelfth century and eventually replaced by the medieval Paradise cemetery. One of the stone coffins was translated, but the others were left *in situ*. Two were found with the original body still in place when they were uncovered in 1966–7, but the other two had been reused during the later Middle Ages.³² The problem is to find out where the bodies translated directly into the new cathedral were placed. The relics of Bishop Æthelwold (d.984) were taken out of the old *feretrum* and placed in a new one in 1111, but none of the others is mentioned again until 1150, when the *Winchester Annals*, compiled c.1200, record the translation of the relics of five of the early bishops.³³ Nothing is said about where they were taken from, or where they were now placed, and three of them do not appear later among the 'saints' named on the fourteenth-century choir screen or among those in the mortuary chests.³⁴ This move is probably not therefore the same as that described by a strictly contemporary writer, Robert, prior of Winchester in 1165–73 during the last years of Bishop Henry of Blois. Robert wrote a now lost account of the acts of Bishops William (1110–29) and Henry (1129–71) from which the fifteenth-century Winchester historian, Thomas Rudborne, says that he took the following account:

Frater enim [*i.e.* Athelardus] & soror [*i.e.* Fryde(s) wyth] ambo jacent sepulti in Ecclesia Wyntoniensi. Scilicet Escuinus & Kentwynus, quorum ossa postmodum tempore Henrici Blesensis Wyntoniensis Episcopi translata sunt, & propter ignorantiam qui essent Reges, & qui essent Episcopi, eo quod non erant tituli inscripti super monumenta eorum; prædictus Henricus Episcopus posuit in sarcophagis plumbeis, Reges cum Episcopis, & Episcopos cum Regibus, simul permixtos; ut habetur in quodam libello Roberti Prioris Wyntoniensis, & postmodum Glastoniensis Abbatis, *de actibus Willelmi & Henrici, Episcoporum Wyntoniae*.

Brother and sister [King Æthelheard of Wessex, d.740?, and Queen Fritheswyth? [d.?] both lie buried in Winchester Church. Likewise Æscwine [king of Wessex, d.676] and Centwine [king of Wessex, d.685], whose bones were translated in the time of Henry of

Blois, bishop of Winchester. And because it was not known who were kings, and who were bishops, since names were not written on their tombs, Bishop Henry put them in lead sarcophagi, kings with bishops, and bishops with kings, all completely mixed up, as it says in the pamphlet by Robert, prior of Winchester and afterwards abbot of Glastonbury, called 'The Acts of William and Henry, bishops of Winchester'.³⁵

This move is also entered in a late thirteenth-century hand in the Winchester Cathedral Cartulary:

Anno incarnationis Domini M.C.LVIII. Dominus Henricus W[intoniensis] episcopus corpora regum et pontificum que a Vetere Monasterio in novam ecclesiam translata fuerant, ab indecenti loco elevata circa magnum altare beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli honorificentius collocari fecit.

AD 1158. Henry, lord bishop of Winchester (Henry of Blois, 1129–71), arranged for the bodies of the kings and bishops which had been translated from Old Minster into the new church to be raised from an unsuitable place and set more honourably around the great altar of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.³⁶

The source from which this document was copied is not known; although its form suggests that it came from a series of annals, it is not included in the *Winchester Annals*.

These three sources are notable for several reasons. They provide the first references we have to the presence of the bodies of the kings and bishops in the Norman cathedral. They are also the first information we have since their original burials were recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and related sources long before. In addition, the third entry, dated 1158 in the cartulary, states that the bodies *had been* translated *into* the new church, with the implication that the *locus indecens* from which it alone says they were now raised was somewhere inside the Norman cathedral itself. But where the *locus indecens* was, and in what way it was 'unseemly', this document does not say.

The statement attributed by Rudborne to Prior Robert may be the account of an eye-witness. Although Robert did not become prior until 1165, seven years after the recorded date of the translation, it is likely that he was already a monk at Winchester

in 1158. The information that the bones came from unmarked *monumenta*, that they were 'as a result' or 'thus' unidentifiable, and that Bishop Henry placed them in lead sarcophagi, may therefore be trustworthy. The Latin does not make clear whether the bones were already mixed up, but this seems the natural implication.

In considering where the remains may have been since the demolition of Old Minster in 1093–4, all we have to go on at first sight, apart from the description *indecentis*, are the statements that the place was somewhere from which the bodies could be raised, and that it contained *monumenta* which did not have *tituli* written on them. It has long been assumed that the *locus indecentis* was the great crypt under the eastern arm of the Norman church. For centuries the crypt has flooded most winters. The original builders cannot have known this would happen, and it may not have flooded until some change in the ground-water regime brought it about. If the crypt was wet each year already in the twelfth century, it would have been an unseemly place for the royal burials, and burials removed from there to the presbytery could certainly be said to have been raised. The remains of the kings and bishops would in this case have been moved from Old Minster directly into the new crypt in 1093, perhaps still in their stone coffins (*monumenta?*), to be raised from there into the presbytery some sixty or so years later in the middle of the twelfth century.

Another possibility is that the *locus indecentis* was the 'memorial court' focused on the monument over St Swithun's original grave just north of the west end of the Norman nave, in the area which developed into the medieval Paradise cemetery from c.1200 onwards.³⁷ There are, however, good reasons for supposing as we have seen, that the graves of Cnut's family were in the east end of Old Minster.³⁸ If the *locus indecentis* was the 'memorial court' at the west end, the bodies would have to have been stored during demolition and *re-located*, perhaps after an interval of some years,³⁹ in the open air around the site of St Swithun's grave, before being subsequently translated into the Norman church in the 1150s.

Since the history of these Danish royal remains displays a preference for a location in the east end of the church, both in Old Minster and later in the Norman cathedral, this seems unlikely.

The Danish Royal Burials in the Norman Cathedral: a New Interpretation

(Figure 12.6A)⁴⁰

All previous discussion of what happened to the bodies of King Cnut and his family after their removal from Old Minster in 1093 has been based on these documents, and explained in terms of what Bishop Henry of Blois may or may not have done to their sadly neglected remains sixty years later in the 1150s. There are several reasons why such a view is unsatisfactory. First, these people were recently dead in 1093, not as distant as King Christian X of Denmark or King George VI from us today. Second, Emma was the central figure in William the Conqueror's claim to the English throne (cf. Table 12.1). Third, the identity of two of the lesser figures, Earl Beorn and the Conqueror's son, Richard, was carefully preserved by an inscription on the surviving lead chest containing their remains, an inscription which can be dated by the style of the lettering to the time of the translation in 1093.

It seems inconceivable that the identity of these great figures from the recent past should have been lost and their remains have become hopelessly mixed; inconceivable too, that their remains should have been so neglected that they had to be brought up in the 1150s from somewhere which might be described as *indecentis*.

The sources describing what Bishop Henry did to the kings and bishops do not mention the Danish and other recent royal burials, perhaps because their remains were carefully preserved and well known. When any names are mentioned they belong to the much more distant past of the kingdom of Wessex. If Bishop Henry's actions were confined to improving the setting of the more ancient kings and bishops, it becomes easier to understand how their remains might have become muddled and neglected.

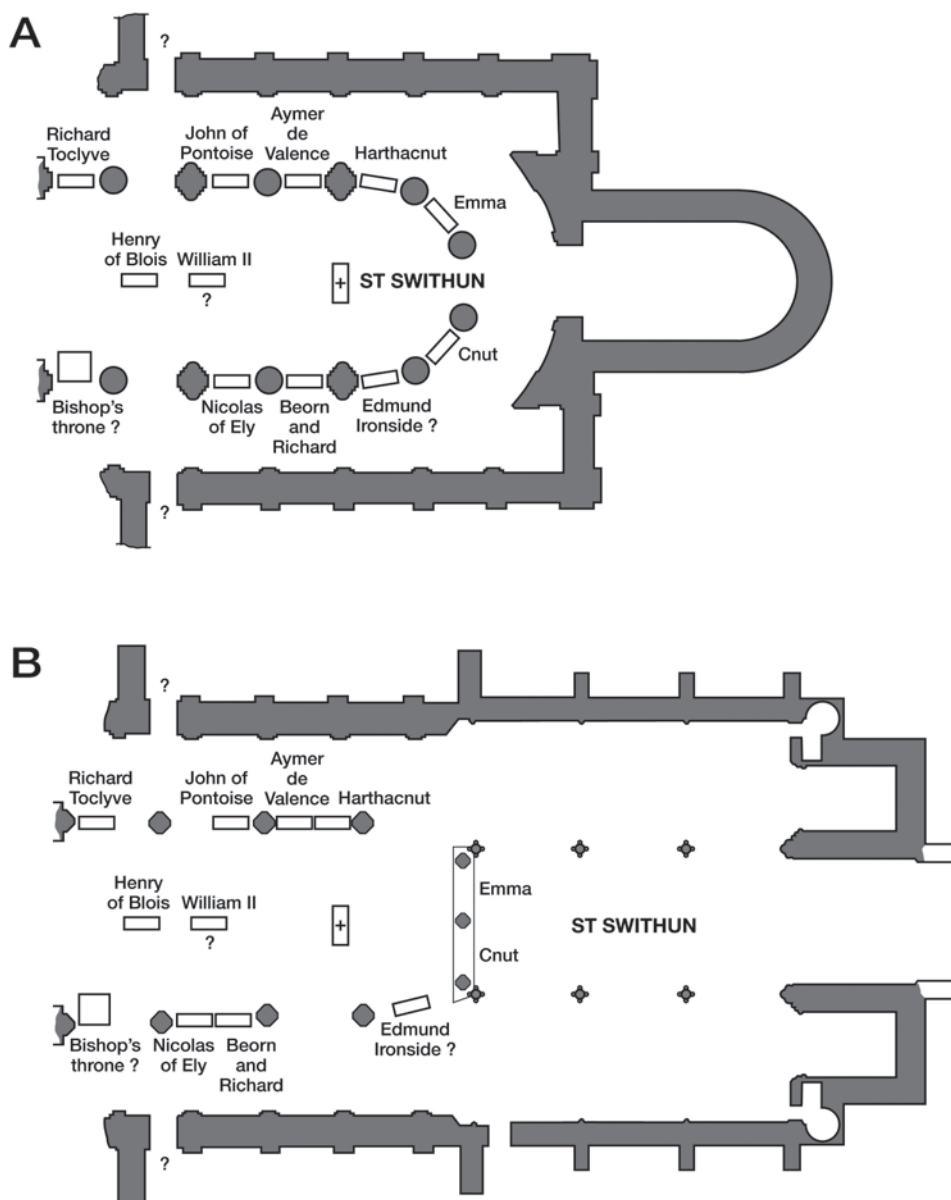


Figure 12.6. Winchester Cathedral: (A) The Norman presbytery as built 1079–93, showing the suggested positions of the Anglo-Danish royal graves. The graves of King William II Rufus (d.1110) and of those bishops who were buried in the Norman presbytery between 1171 and 1304 are also shown in their suggested positions. (B) The presbytery after the reconstruction of c.1310–15, showing the same graves in their new positions. The reliquary of St Swithun was probably placed at first centrally behind the altar, in front of the central column between the reliquaries of Emma and Cnut. In 1476 Swithun's reliquary was moved eastwards to a new shrine erected at the focus of the four columns of the retrochoir. (Drawn by Hamish Roberton and Simon Hayfield. © Winchester Excavations Committee)

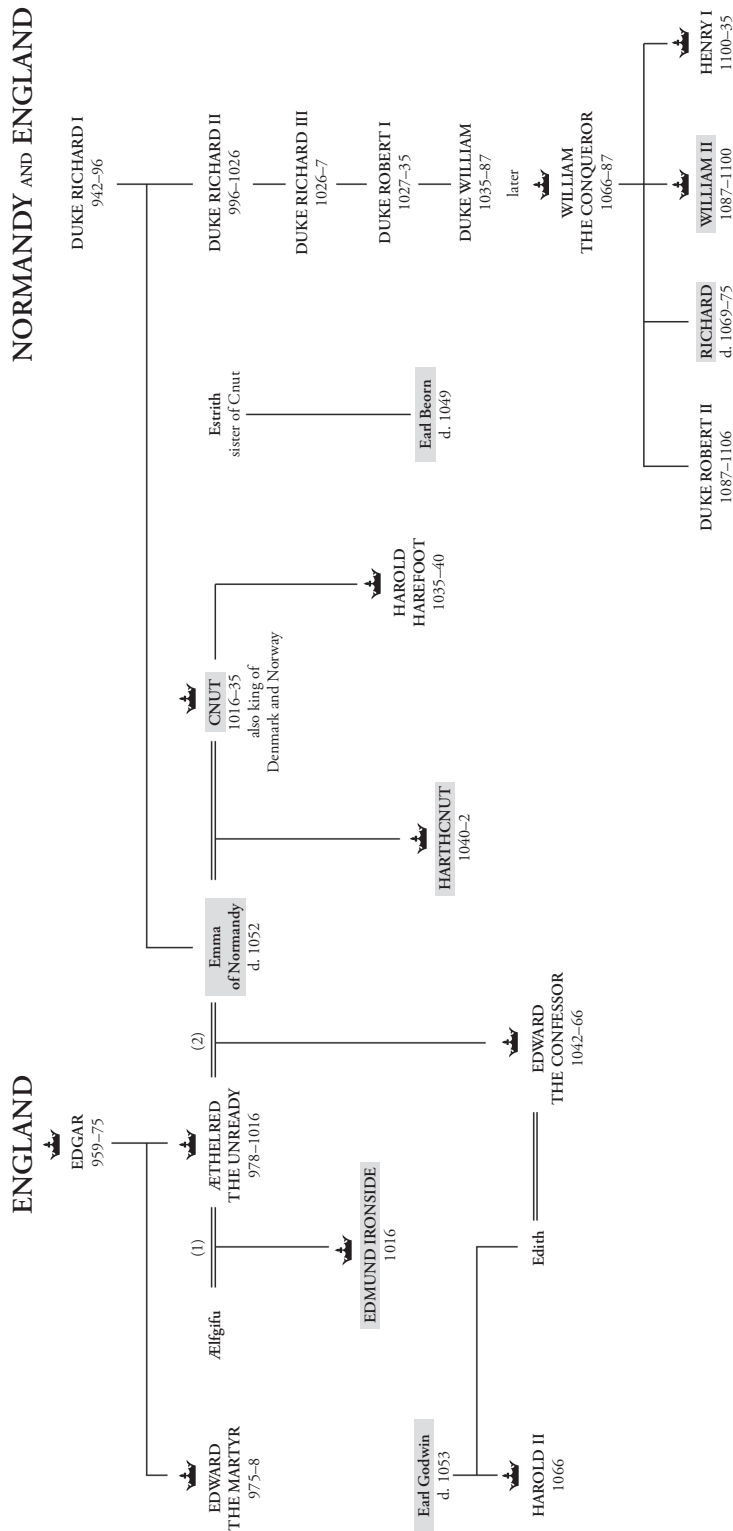


Table 12.1: Genealogy of the houses of England, Denmark, and Normandy, 959–1135. (The names of those buried at Old Minster are highlighted)



Figure 12.7. Winchester Cathedral, looking west from the retrochoir towards the early fourteenth-century screen commemorating benefactors at the east end of the presbytery. The entrance to 'The Holy Hole' is in the middle. The nine empty niches each contained two statuettes, Jesus and Mary in the central niche, and thirteen kings, Queen Emma, and two bishops in chronological sequence from left (south) to right (north). (Photograph © John Crook)

Such a view allows a more straight forward explanation of what happened to the Danish royal burials in 1093: that they were brought from Old Minster directly into the east end of the new cathedral and placed in a position of the greatest honour around the presbytery to either side of St Swithun.⁴¹ This view emerges directly from considering the Danish royal graves as a group, and the most important clue is the survival of a tomb

belonging to King Harthacnut on the north side of the north screen of the presbytery (Figures 12.21–2).

These screens, built by Bishop Fox and others in 1525, incorporated seven earlier burials in six tombs.⁴² Four of these burials were Norman and later bishops.⁴³ The other three were royal seculars who had been buried initially in Old Minster and translated into the Norman cathedral in 1093. All six tombs may once have stood between the piers of the Norman presbytery arcade (Figure 12.6A). When the presbytery was remodelled in the early fourteenth century, the thirteen Norman arches were replaced by ten early fourteenth-century arches (Figures 12.6B and 12.8).⁴⁴ This change required the movement of the tombs lying beneath the Norman arches, including those around the curve of the apse, although the feretory of St Swithun in the crown of the apse was kept in position, and pilgrims could still reach beneath it by entering the passage known in the Middle Ages as 'The Holy Hole' (Figure 12.7).⁴⁵

The changes meant that tombs placed beneath the pair of Norman arches to either side of the central position occupied by St Swithun's feretory had to be moved when the apse was demolished. By contrast, the tombs placed beneath the arches to the north and south of the presbytery need not have been taken away if their position could be adjusted; not a difficult operation if the bodies were in stone coffins or lead chests. The Norman piers here were about 3 m apart, leaving ample space for a stone coffin standing on the floor between each pair of piers. After the reconstruction of c.1310–15, there was space between each new arch for two graves lying head to foot.

This seems to be what Fox's screen implies, with two smaller bays beneath each of the three arches to either side of the presbytery (Figures 12.8 and 12.17). Two of the screen bays are occupied by doors, leaving space for ten tombs, six of which remain (Figure 12.6B): King Harthacnut and Bishop Aymer de Valence (d.1260) under the eastern arch on the north side (Figures 12.17 and 12.21); Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror together in one tomb, and the heart of Bishop Nicholas of Ely

(d.1280) in another, under the central arch on the south side (Figure 12.8); Bishop John of Pontoise (d.1304) under the east half of the central arch on the north side; and Bishop Richard Toclyve (d.1188) and the north door of the presbytery under the west arch on the north side.⁴⁶ Omitting the three central bays around the curve of the apse, there would have been space for ten tombs beneath the arches of the Norman presbytery, or seven if two arches were occupied by doors, the forerunners of Fox's doors, and one by the bishop's throne. Since all six tombs actually built into the north and south screens contain burials made before the fourteenth-century reconstruction (Harthacnut and bishops Richard Toclyve, John of Pontoise, and Aymer de Valence, on the north; Beorn, Richard, and bishop Nicholas of Ely, on the south), it looks as if their burials may be remnants of the arrangement in the Norman presbytery, adjusted after the rebuilding of c.1310–15. Their previous arrangement can perhaps be recovered by moving each tomb the minimum needed to replace it beneath the nearest Norman arch (Figure 12.6A).

If, as this suggests, Harthacnut's tomb lay beneath one of the arches of the north arcade of the presbytery before 1525, it was probably there long before. If so, the most likely date for placing it in this position would have been in 1093, when the Norman presbytery was first brought into use, and the most important burials were translated from Old Minster. This was probably also the case with Earl Beorn and Richard, son of William the Conqueror, not least because there seems no other time when their burials would have been given such prominence.

The surviving evidence suggests that of all the bodies removed from Old Minster into the Norman cathedral; only those of Harthacnut, Beorn, Richard, and Edmund Ironside were placed in separate tombs rather than in ossuary chests.⁴⁷ This is a very strange selection: why should these four royal burials alone have been given special treatment in the new cathedral? And why were they chosen rather than Cnut and Emma?

By the time of the early fourteenth-century



Figure 12.8. The south screen of the presbytery, 1525, with the tomb of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror under the further of the two arched niches, looking north-east. On top of the screen are two of Bishop Fox's chests of 1525, the further one containing the supposed bones of King Edmund (d.1016). (Photograph © John Crook)

reconstruction, eight of the thirteen spaces between the piers of the Norman presbytery were occupied (St Swithun beneath the central arch to the east, Harthacnut, Beorn with Richard, Edmund, and four bishops). Two of the remaining five spaces may, on the analogy of Fox's screens, have been used for entrances in and out of the presbytery. This leaves three spaces, one at the west end of the south arcade, occupied since the Middle Ages by the bishop's throne,⁴⁸ and one to either side of the saint. It seems unlikely that the spaces beside St Swithun were left unoccupied by tombs. Whose were they?

The royal burials known to have taken place in Old Minster fall into two groups: an earlier group

of West Saxon kings beginning with Cenwealh (d.672) and ending with Æthelwulf (d.858),⁴⁹ and a later group consisting of Cnut (d.1035) and the members of his family (Tables 12.1 and 12.2). In the two centuries between, only two kings were buried in Old Minster: Alfred (d.899, translated into New Minster, c.903) and Eadred (d.955). Some of the earlier group, including Eadred, are now, in theory, in Fox's chests. They were therefore removed from Old Minster in 1093–4, but we do not know where they were put. Perhaps it was they who were first in the *locus indecens* and were subsequently elevated by Bishop Henry in 1158 and placed in lead sarcophagi?

The later group is quite another matter. Cnut had been buried less than sixty years before the move to the Norman cathedral; Emma only forty years before. Emma was William the Conqueror's great-aunt, Harthacnut his 'cousin'. This group shared a northern origin with the Norman rulers of Normandy. They were the Conqueror's predecessors as rulers of his new English kingdom, and they were all 'family', but Emma was also the basis of his claim to the throne of England.⁵⁰

In addition to Cnut, Emma, Harthacnut, and Beorn, there are two other members of this group of royal burials translated from Old Minster, Richard son of William the Conqueror and Edmund son of Æthelred. Our evidence for Richard's burial at Winchester is the presence of his tomb below a niche in the south screen of the presbytery (Figures 12.8–10a, 12.11–12). The tomb is covered by a slab of Purbeck marble with an inscription followed by a floral scroll, the letter forms suggesting a date in the later twelfth century (Figure 12.10a shows the second half of the inscription relating to Beorn):

+ HIC : IACET : RICARDVS : WILL'I SENIORIS
: REGIS : FILI' : ET : BEORN : DVX :

+ Here lies Richard son of King William the Elder,
and Duke Beorn

When the tomb was opened in 1887 it was found to contain a lead coffin inscribed in earlier non-Lombardic capitals with the words (Figures 12.11–12):

RICARD' FILI' WL'I SENIORIS REGIS ET
BEORN DVX⁵¹

The identity of Beorn is clear: he is the nephew of Cnut and Emma and was murdered in 1049.⁵² Richard was William the Conqueror's second son. He was born c.1055 and died sometime between 1069 and 1075, some fifteen years before his younger brother William succeeded to their father's throne in 1087.⁵³ Richard's place of burial is not recorded in the contemporary sources, but he died while hunting in the New Forest and these inscriptions, the one on the lead coffin as early as the late eleventh century,⁵⁴ show that he must have been brought for burial first in Old Minster (some years before the start of the building of the Norman cathedral) and was translated into the east end of the new cathedral in 1093, during his brother William's reign, and perhaps in his presence.⁵⁵

Our evidence for the burial at Winchester of King Edmund (d. 1016), son of King Æthelred the Unready (Table 12.1), is a second Purbeck marble slab inscribed in letters formally identical to those used for the inscription on the slab of Beorn and Richard, and suggesting a similar date in the later twelfth century (Figure 12.10b). Edmund's inscription reads:

+ HIC : IACET : EDMVNDVS : REX : EÞELDREDI
: REGIS : FILIVS

+ Here lies King Edmund son of King Æthelred.⁵⁶

Edmund was the son of King Æthelred II (978–1016) and his first wife Ælfgifu (of Northumbria?), and succeeded his father as king in April 1016. After heavy fighting that summer, an agreement between the English and the Danes recognised Edmund as ruler of Wessex, and Cnut as ruler of the rest of England. Following Edmund's sudden death in November, Cnut became ruler of all England.

There is a difficulty: Edmund Ironside was buried at Glastonbury in 1016.⁵⁷ There in 1032 on 30 November, the anniversary of Edmund's death, Cnut paid homage 'as to a brother' at his tomb in the abbey, laying on it a cloak decorated with peacocks, perhaps a Byzantine silk.⁵⁸ By this ceremony, Cnut



Figure 12.9. The tomb of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror, c.1525 and earlier. The Latin inscription of 1525 wrongly identifies Richard as BEORNIE DVCIS, 'Duke of Beornia'. (Photograph © John Crook)

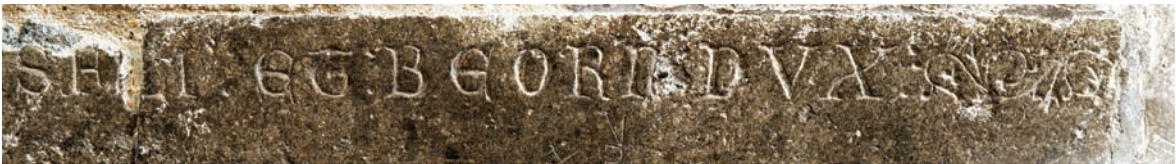


Figure 12.10a. The second half of the inscription on the later twelfth-century Purbeck marble tomb-slab of Earl Beorn and Richard, son of 'King William the Elder', reading REGI] S : FILI' : ET : BEORN : DVX : [floral scroll] (Photograph © John Crook)



Figure 12.10b. The second half of the inscription on the later twelfth-century Purbeck marble tomb-slab of Edmund Ironside, reading [Ep]ELDREDI : REGIS : FILIVS : (Photograph © John Crook)

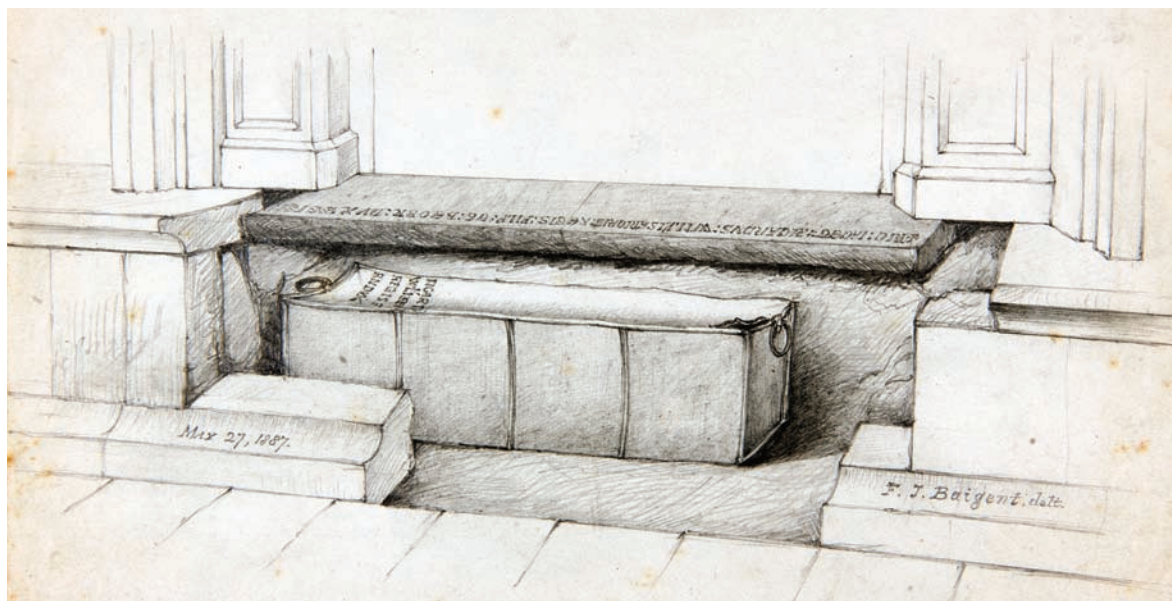


Figure 12.11. The tomb of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror. Original drawing by F. J. Baigent when their tomb was opened on 27 May 1887. Winchester Cathedral Archives. (Photograph © John Crook)

may 'have intended to remind those present that he had come to the throne as a result of the treaty he had made with Edmund' sixteen years before.⁵⁹ Since Glastonbury continued to claim Edmund's tomb throughout the Middle Ages,⁶⁰ the inscription at Winchester is either a fabrication – but to what purpose? Edmund was not a royal saint whose body might have been a coveted relic – or Edmund's body (or part of it) was translated to Winchester at some date in or after 1032. Here the family connections of Cnut and Edmund are central. Edmund had become Emma's stepson by her marriage to Æthelred in 1002, and became Cnut's posthumous stepson through his marriage to Emma in 1017. William of Malmesbury records a century later how Cnut was accustomed to call Edmund his brother. Thus, although there is no record of Edmund's translation to Winchester, the evidence of the inscriptions in Winchester cathedral is corroborated by Cnut's assertion of brotherhood and the indications that he and Emma intended the creation in Old Minster of a family mausoleum.

Royal bodies could be moved great distances to secure burial in a church with which the family had close connections.⁶¹ The removal of some at least of Edmund's remains to Winchester has to be seen in this light, and the most likely moment is Cnut's visit to Glastonbury in 1032, when the gift of a royal cloak may have been in return for the privilege.

Where then were these six royal burials (Cnut, Emma, Harthacnut, Beorn, Edmund, and Richard) placed after their removal from Old Minster into the east end of the new Norman cathedral? As we have seen, Harthacnut, Beorn, and Richard can be located by adjusting their present positions to the bays of the former arcade of the Norman presbytery (Figure 12.6A). Edmund again presents a more difficult problem. In 1798, his grave slab (Figure 12.10b) was in the floor of Bishop Gardiner's chantry chapel, to the north of the site of the Norman apse.⁶² In the mid fifteenth century, it was lying in the ground on the north side of the altar, *ubi missa matutinalis sive capitularis celebratur*, 'where the morning or chapter

mass is celebrated', but this too was probably not its original position, for Edmund's bones had already been translated and, by the mid fifteenth century, were in a sarcophagus placed over 'The Holy Hole', *i.e.* on the screen then forming the east end of the presbytery (Figure 12.7).⁶³ The simplest explanation is to suppose that from the twelfth century Edmund's slab covered his tomb beneath one of the arches at the east end of the Norman presbytery (Figure 12.6A). When those bays were replaced in c.1310–15, his remains were probably placed in a (lead?) chest and put on the new eastern screen wall as nearly as possible in their previous position. His slab was then laid in the floor on the north side of the altar used for the morning mass (*i.e.* some altar other than the high altar), moved again when Gardiner's chantry was built in the 1550s, and finally placed against the south screen sometime before 1818.

Two royal burials are still unaccounted for, King Cnut and Queen Emma, but the two most important spaces to either side of St Swithun's reliquary remain to be filled. If the arguments offered here are valid, this is where they were placed (Figure 12.6A). The burial of King William II Rufus in 1100 *in choro monachorum ante majus altare*, 'in the choir before the high altar',⁶⁴ near to his older brother Richard, and among his kinsmen, would thus have been the continuation of a tradition established by Cnut and Emma in the 1030s, and transferred into the east end of the new Norman cathedral in 1093 during William Rufus's own reign.⁶⁵

This reconstruction illuminates an architectural concept which goes back to the start of the building of the new cathedral in 1079 in the reign of William the Conqueror. It has been clear since the excavation of Old Minster in the 1960s that the twin-towered west front of the Norman cathedral replaced and reflected the westwork of Old Minster. It can now also be seen that the east arm of the new cathedral replaced and reflected the great eastern apse of Old Minster, in form and relative scale, and in its function as a royal mausoleum (Figures 12.3–4).⁶⁶ The design of the new cathedral was thus inspired in several distinct ways by Old Minster, whose traditions it

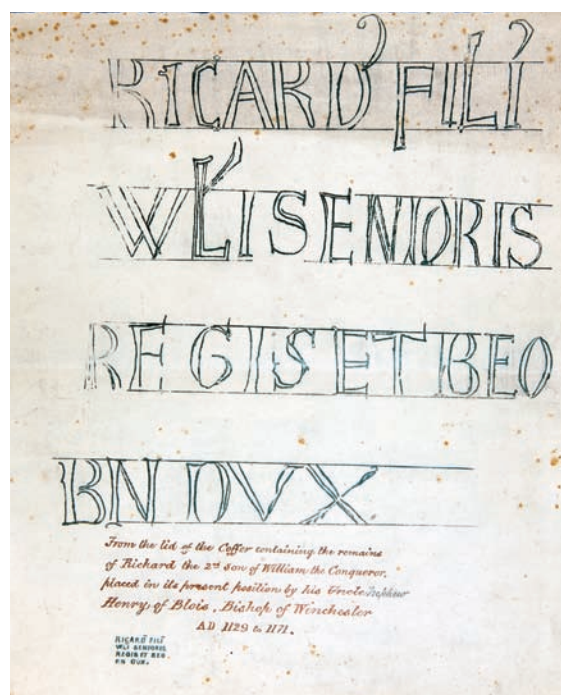


Figure 12.12. The inscription on the lead coffin of Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror, facsimile from a rubbing made by F. J. Baigent when their tomb was opened on 27 May 1887. Winchester Cathedral Archives. (Photograph © John Crook)

both inherited and enhanced. Here too at last is some explanation of the stupendous size of the Norman church which was designed to provide posterity with visible proof of the dynastic claims and legitimacy of Norman rule (Figure 12.1; cf. Table 12.2). This was where the Norman dukes, become kings, 'wore their crown' every Easter that they were in England, at the most important ceremony of the Christian year.⁶⁷ And this was where from henceforth they were to lie among their English and their Danish forebears.

Almost at once the plan faltered. William the Conqueror died near Rouen following an accident or seizure at the capture of Mantes, and was taken to Caen to be buried in the abbey he had founded. His son Richard already lay in Winchester and his younger son William Rufus was laid there in 1100.

But in the first years of the reign of Henry I, the Conqueror's fourth and youngest son, who was himself in time buried in the abbey he had founded at Reading, the bond between Winchester and the English crown slackened and the city began its long decline. The regular crown-wearing at Easter took place in Winchester for the last time in 1104.⁶⁸ Over the next two centuries most of the unoccupied spaces beneath the presbytery arches were filled by the burials of bishops (Figure 12.6A). When the presbytery was rebuilt in the early fourteenth century, the royal burials in the curve of the apse, beside the reliquary of St Swithun, had to be moved. It was probably then that the bodies of Cnut and Emma were transferred into chests and placed on top of the new screen commemorating benefactors (Figures 12.6B and 12.7). The tombs lying further away from the apse, Harthacnut, Beorn, Richard son of William, and the bishops were left more or less in position to be incorporated two centuries later into Fox's screens.

King Cnut and Queen Emma had created a family mausoleum in the east end of Old Minster. Two generations later, their Norman kinsman and descendant, William the Conqueror, recreated their mausoleum in the eastern arm of one of the greatest churches of the medieval West, twice the length of Old Minster. It is a fitting monument to the long developing relationship between Denmark, Normandy and England which had come to involve 'the medieval destiny of a large part of northern Europe'.⁶⁹

The Royal Burials in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

This disposition of the Danish royal burials lasted unchanged for the two centuries after 1093. In the 1150s, Bishop Henry seems, on the interpretation adopted here, to have brought the remains of the earlier kings and bishops of Wessex up from some less suitable place and to have put them in new lead chests arranged around the presbytery. There was plenty of space between each pair of columns to add reliquary chests, and it is possible to imagine

how these might have been arranged so that they could be seen by pilgrims from the lower level of the ambulatory outside the presbytery, while the more recent royal burials faced inwards onto the presbytery and the high altar.

Bishop Henry made other improvements. He constructed a raised platform between the central columns at the crown of the apse to support the altar on which the relics of St Swithun rested.⁷⁰ He also had carved a series of inscriptions running around the curve of the outside of the presbytery, and visible at about eye-level from the ambulatory. These are in a style of lettering datable to the second half of the twelfth century, cut into the stone blocks of the apse, several of which have been discovered over the years, reused in different parts of the cathedral. The inscriptions named individuals and recorded the donations they had made to the cathedral. Only one inscription has so far been recovered reasonably intact, naming Bishop Ælfwine (1032–47) and listing his donations. Other blocks refer to an *Adulfus* and an *Edwardus*, presumably the kings Æthelwulf (839–58) and Edward the Elder (899–924) or Edward the Confessor (1042–66).⁷¹

Since the inscriptions ran around the curve of the apse facing onto the ambulatory, it seems probable that by the second half of the twelfth century the remains of some of the kings and bishops had found a resting place above the inscriptions which recalled their donations. They had thus come to lie to either side of St Swithun in a semi-circle between the piers of the Norman presbytery, visible from the lower level of the surrounding ambulatory, as their more recent successors were visible from inside the presbytery. But not all the kings named were buried in the cathedral. Edward the Elder had been buried in New Minster (and by this date his body will have been translated to Hyde Abbey outside the North Gate) and Edward the Confessor lay at Westminster, so that the inscription around the presbytery apse was more a commemoration of benefactors than a record of burials.

Bishop Henry seems also to have improved the display of some of the Anglo-Danish royal burials.

The Purbeck marble slabs of Richard son of William with Earl Beorn (Figure 12.10a) and of King Edmund (Figure 12.10b)⁷² are inscribed in a style of lettering very similar to that of the inscription round the apse of the presbytery. Although letter forms are a notoriously difficult guide to the date of inscriptions, it must seem likely that these three inscriptions date from the period of interest in the remains of the kings and bishops which Henry of Blois is known to have initiated. Bishop Henry's role may have been to provide monuments to enclose the lead chests in which some of the royal remains were transferred from Old Minster. One of these chests has survived below the slab of Richard and Beorn (Figures 12.11–12). Another may await discovery beneath or behind the Renaissance tomb-plaque of Harthacnut (Figure 12.22) and, if so, would contain the earliest surviving burial of any king of England or Denmark.

The Royal Burials in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

This arrangement was changed again in the early fourteenth century when the Romanesque apse and its arcade were demolished and replaced to north and south by a new arcades of four bays and on the east by a straight wall supporting a pair of arches springing from a central pier (Figure 12.6B). The wall below the eastern arches formed a screen across the east side of the area behind the high altar, an area today, and probably long since, known as 'the feretory', from the presence within it of the feretory (shrine) of St Swithun. On the east face of the screen, facing the retrochoir, were nine double niches for statuettes of Jesus, the Virgin, thirteen kings, two bishops, and Queen Emma (Figure 12.7). Two Latin hexameters incised along the front of the screen below the niches proclaimed:

Corpora sanctorum sunt hic in pace sepulta
Ex meritis quorum fulgent miracula multa.

The bodies of saints, through whose merits many
miracles shine forth,
are buried here in peace.

These verses show that the kings and bishops could be described as 'saints'. They also seem to suggest that the names and statuettes were intended to refer to persons whose bodily remains were preserved nearby, but of the thirteen kings named, six were buried elsewhere.⁷³ Like the twelfth-century inscriptions they replaced, these figures were a commemoration of benefactors, only some of whom were also buried nearby.

The central niche was once occupied by the figure of Jesus with St Mary to his right. To either side of the central niche, the figures were arranged in almost chronological order from left to right (south to north). On the pedestals below the seventh niche are the names *Emma Regina* and *Alwinus Episcopus* identifying the statuettes of Queen Emma and Bishop Ælfwine, both now missing. Beneath the northernmost niche are the names *Cnutus Rex* and *Hardecnutus Rex filius eius*, the statuettes also missing (Figure 12.14). The remains of the kings and bishops were now presumably placed on the top of the screen below the two eastern arches and beneath the arches to either side of the presbytery.

This is the first direct evidence we have in nearly three centuries for the individual rulers, and the first evidence to suggest that the bodies of the Anglo-Danish royal house had in actual fact been transferred into the new cathedral and located in the area of the high altar. From now on, the tradition is continuous.

In the fifteenth century, the lead boxes (both those provided by Henry of Blois in the twelfth century, and such earlier ones as survived) were still placed on the east screen and on screens or dwarf walls running between the piers to north and south of the presbytery.⁷⁴ During the course of the century, some of the boxes were replaced by (or enclosed within) painted wooden chests, two of which survive, one dating from c.1425 and the other from nearer to 1500.⁷⁵ The difference in date between the two chests, and the mid fifteenth-century references to lead boxes, suggests that the lead boxes were now in decay and were being replaced from time to time as need arose.

Unlike the lead boxes still today encased within



Figure 12.13. Winchester Cathedral, the northernmost niches of the early fourteenth-century screen, with bases for the statuettes of King Æthelred, King Edward the Confessor, King Cnut, and King Harthacnut. (Photograph © John Crook)



Figure 12.14. Winchester Cathedral, inscriptions identifying the bases of lost statuettes of 'Cnutus Rex' and 'Hardecnutus Rex, filius eius' in the northernmost niche of the early fourteenth-century screen. (Photograph © John Crook)

the plinth of Fox's screens,⁷⁶ none of the lead boxes which had stood on top of the earlier screens now survives, but one at least, that of Cnut himself, was inscribed on both sides with a line of verse:

Moribus imbutus, hic iacet nomine Knutus

Full of good works, here lies one Cnut by name.⁷⁷

This suggests that the other lead boxes were also inscribed and explains how it was known who was supposed to lie in each. The inscriptions on the lead boxes will have provided the information for the texts painted on the wooden chests which replaced them in the fifteenth century and, where the lead boxes had not already been replaced, for the chests provided in Bishop Fox's great re-organisation of 1525.

The Royal Burials in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

Richard Fox (bishop, 1501–28) completed his reconstruction of the east arm of the cathedral in 1525 with the reordering of the presbytery.⁷⁸ This involved the construction of new stone screens running between the piers of the fourteenth-century arcades. The screens, Gothic in their openwork tracery but elaborately Renaissance in decoration, incorporated a series of earlier tombs, presumably in the positions they already occupied between the piers.⁷⁹ On top of the screens, Fox placed a series of perhaps ten wooden chests (Figure 12.8 and 12.17), entirely Renaissance in character, the first monuments in the cathedral to show no trace of Gothic detail.⁸⁰

Four of Fox's chests survive, and these have inscriptions painted on panels carved on the long sides.⁸¹ The other six chests were destroyed in 1642. Our knowledge of the inscriptions on the lost chests, and thus of the supposed identity of the remains in each chest, rests on a sequence of descriptions written between the end of the sixteenth century and 1642:

Anon. c.1590

BL, Harleian MS 6072, fols 29r-v: part of a series of on-site notes on the churches and cathedrals of

England. The list of the mortuary chests at Winchester is headed *Quaedam Monumenta noviter et in alto redacta supra Locos antiquos* ('Certain monuments newly set up on high above their old positions').⁸²

Godwin 1601

Francis Godwin, *A Catalogue of the Bishops of England*, London, 1601, list the chests on the north screen believed to contain the remains of pre-Conquest bishops, including Stigand

Lieutenant 1635

L. G. Wickham Legg, ed., *A Relation of a Short Survey of the Western Counties Made by a Lieutenant of the Military Company in Norwich in 1635*, Royal Historical Society, Camden Miscellany 16 (London, 1936)

Ryves 1643

Bruno Ryves, *Mercurius Rusticus, or the Countries Complaint of the Sacriledges, Prophanations and Plunderings Committed by the Rebels on the Cathedral Churches of this Kingdome*, 20th week, 24 February 1643/4 (but referring to 13 December 1642), pp. 164–5 [copy in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hope adds. 1133]; republished with minor variants Oxford, 1646, pp. 210–12 [copy in Bodleian Library, Hope 8°, 638]

Clarendon 1683/4

Henry Hyde (1638–1709), Second Earl of Clarendon, 'Some Account of the Tombs and Monuments in the Cathedral Church of Winchester, finish'd this 17th Day of February, 1683' [1684], but subsequently edited by Samuel Gale, *The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Winchester* (London, 1715): see the title-page, note on sig. A5r., and p. 32 of the first set of pagination. The references here are to pp. 25–40 of the second set of pagination which print Clarendon's (edited) account. Clarendon seems to have relied upon a now unidentified source for several of the inscriptions which were 'formerly' [*i.e.* before 1642] on the chests.

When the contents of the ten chests were noted in 1635, presumably on the evidence of their inscriptions, 'King Canutus, and his Son Hardicanute' were said to be 'both in one' on the south side, and 'Queen Emma, and her Sonne', also apparently together, on the north.⁸³ 'Canutus' and 'Hardecanutus' were again both listed as being in the chests at the time of their



Figure 12.15. Winchester Cathedral, the mortuary chest of 1661 on top of the south screen of the presbytery, beside the bishop's throne, looking south-west. The chest, a replacement of 1661 following the sack of 1642, is said to contain the remains of Cnut and Emma. (Photograph © John Crook)

violation by Parliamentary soldiers in December 1642, when

... these monsters of men, to whom nothing is holy, nothing is Sacred, did not stick to profane, and violate these Cabinets of the dead, and to scatter their bones all over the pavement of the Church: for on the North side of the Quire, they threw down the Chests, wherein were deposited the bones of the *Bishops*, the like they did to the bones of *William Rufus*, of *Queen Emma*, of *Hardecanutus*, and *Edward the Confessor*, and were going on, to practise the like impiety on the bones of all the rest of the *West Saxon Kings*. But the outcry of the people, detesting so great inhumanity, caused some of their Commanders (more Compassionate to these auncient Monuments of the dead than the Rest) to come in amongst them, and to restrain their madnesse. But that divelish malice ... did satiate it selfe, even to a prodigious kind of wantonnesse, on *those*, which were already in their power: And ... those Windows which they could not reach with their Swords, Muskets, or Rests, they brake to pieces, by throwing at them,



Figure 12.16. The north side of the northern mortuary chest of 1661, showing the inscription added between 1684 and 1692. (Photograph © John Crook)

the bones of *Kings, Queens, Bishops, Confessors, and Saints* ...⁸⁴

Of Bishop Fox's original ten chests, six were destroyed by the Parliamentary troops.⁸⁵ In 1661, when the bones 'scattered about by sacrilegious barbarism' had been gathered together, they were placed in only two new chests, suggesting perhaps that many bones had been lost. There are thus six chests today: the four to the east are originals of Bishop Fox's making; the westernmost chests on each side date from 1661 (Figures 12.15 and 12.17). The chests of 1661 were initially left unpainted,⁸⁶ but between 1684 and 1692 they were both given inscriptions.⁸⁷ On the outer side of each, facing the aisles (Figure 12.16):⁸⁸

Hac in cista A.D^o 1661 promiscve recondita svnt ossa Principvm et Prætatorvm [*sic.*] sacrilega barbari[e] dispersa A^oD 1642

In this chest AD 1661 were brought together again mixed up the bones of princes and prelates scattered by sacrilegious barbarism AD 1642.

And on the inner side of each, facing the presbytery (Figure 12.18):

In hac et altera e regione cista reliqvix svnt ossiun [*sic.*] Canvti et Rvfi Regvm, Emmæ Reginae, Winæ et Alwini Episcoporum.

In this and in the other chest opposite are the remains of the bones of Cnut and Rufus, kings, Emma the queen, Wine and Ælfwine, bishops

There is a great deal of confusion in all this, apart from the corrupt Latin. Cnut was not named as one of those disturbed in 1642,⁸⁹ but his 1525 chest does not survive and must have been one of those broken up in 1642; conversely, Harthacnut is not named on the new chests, although he was apparently named on the 1525 chest with his father;⁹⁰ Rufus (William II, 1087–1100) is never before recorded as being in one of the chests, but may have been included because his tomb had also been broken up by the Parliamentary soldiers in 1642.⁹¹

The Royal Burials in the Modern Period

The remains seem to have lain undisturbed in their boxes throughout the eighteenth century, but a new era began in 1797 when Edmund Cartwright Jr.,⁹² an officer in the West Yorkshire Regiment of Militia, then stationed in Winchester, obtained permission from his friend the dean of Winchester (Newton Ogle, dean 1769–1804) for 'two other gentlemen of this regiment with myself to open any tombs in the cathedral', subject to due care and the attendance of the master mason. Cartwright sent an account of their operations to Richard Gough, who published it in his *Sepulchral Monuments*.⁹³ Henry Howard of Corby Castle, one of the other officers involved, sent another account to the Rev. John Milner, who published a long extract from it in his *History of Winchester*.⁹⁴ 'Assisted by Mr. [John] Hastings, the surgeon of the North Gloucester militia', all six chests were opened and a mixture of bones was found in each. The two chests 'bearing the names of Canute, Rufus, Emma, Wina, Alwin and Stigand'⁹⁵ were found to be 'full of thigh and leg bones' but no skulls, although there were twelve skulls present in the other four chests.

Nothing further was discovered when the contents of the chests were again inspected in 1845.⁹⁶ In 1874, the chests were examined for a third time by the distinguished local historian, F. J. Baigent (d.1918), who discovered two fifteenth-century



Figure 12.17. Winchester Cathedral, the mortuary chests on top of the north screen of the presbytery, looking north-east. The nearest chest, a replacement of 1661 following the sack of 1642, is said to contain the remains of Cnut and Emma. (Photograph © John Crook)

wooden chests inside Bishop Fox's two surviving chests on the north side.⁹⁷

One of the chests was opened again in the 1880s.⁹⁸ In 1932, new inner chests of wood were placed in six chests (Figures 12.19 and 12.20), and in 1959 the material was 'cleaned'.⁹⁹ In the 1960s, the leading Danish physical anthropologist, Vilhelm Møller-Christensen, asked permission to carry out a full examination of the bones in the chests, but was refused. The chests were again opened in the 1990s to allow the taking of the photographs reproduced here in Figures 12.19 and 12.20.

The complete mixing of the bones recorded already in the twelfth century, their scattering and dispersal by the Parliamentary soldiers five centuries later in 1642, their gathering and replacement in 1661, and the complete disorder recorded in the



Figure 12.18. The north side of the southern mortuary chest of 1661, said in the inscription added between 1684 and 1692 to contain the remains of the bones of Kings Cnut and Rufus, of Queen Emma, and Bishops Wine and Ælfwine. (Photograph © John Crook)

Table 12.2. *The burial places of the rulers of Wessex and England, 899–1100, and of Denmark, c.986–1042 (for notes, see p. 235).*

Name and date of death ¹	ASC, <i>Liber Vitae</i> , and/or JW	Winchester Annals (twelfth cent.)	Rudborne, chests, (sixteenth/seventeenth cent.) ²
Alfred, d. 899	Old Minster, then New Minster ³	New Minster ⁴	Old Minster, then New Minster ⁵
Edward the Elder, d. 924	New Minster ⁶	New Minster ⁷	New Minster ⁸
Æthelstan, d.939	Malmesbury ⁹	Malmesbury ¹⁰	Malmesbury ¹¹
Edmund, d.946	Glastonbury ¹²	—	Glastonbury ¹³
Eadred, d.955	Old Minster ¹⁴	Old Minster ¹⁵	Old Minster ¹⁶ (Chest S2)
Eadwig, d.959	New Minster ¹⁷	—	New Minster ¹⁸
Edgar, d.975	Glastonbury ¹⁹	Glastonbury ²⁰	Glastonbury ²¹
Edward the Martyr, d. 978/9	Wareham, then Shaftesbury ²²	Wareham, then Shaftesbury ²³	— ²⁴
Æthelred II d.1016	St Paul's, London ²⁵	St Paul's, London ²⁶	St Paul's, London ²⁷
Swein [Forkbeard], d. 1014	?York, then Lund ²⁸	—	—
Edmund Ironside, d. 1016	Glastonbury ²⁹	Glastonbury ³⁰	Glastonbury ³¹ (also in Old Minster? Chest S3) ³²
Cnut, d.1035	Old Minster ³³	—	Old Minster ³⁴ (Chests N1 and S1)
Harold I Harefoot, d. 1040	Westminster ³⁵	Westminster ³⁶	Westminster ³⁷
Harthacnut, d.1042	Old Minster ³⁸	Old Minster ³⁹	Old Minster ⁴⁰
Edward the Confessor, d. 1066	Westminster ⁴¹	Westminster ⁴²	Westminster ⁴³
Harold II Godwinson, d. 1066	[uncertain ⁴⁴]	Waltham[?] ⁴⁵	Waltham[?] ⁴⁶
William I, d.1087	Saint-Étienne, Caen ⁴⁷	Caen ⁴⁸	Saint-Étienne, Caen ⁴⁹
William II, d.1100	Winchester, in the Norman cathedral ⁵⁰	Winchester, in the Norman cathedral ⁵¹	Winchester, in the Norman cathedral ⁵² (Chests N1 and S1)

first scientific examination in 1797, and seen in the recent photographs, might suggest that little is to be gained by a detailed anthropological study. This may, however, no longer be the case. The development of techniques for the identification and matching of DNA in ancient bone now offers the prospect of reassembling at least some of the bones in the chests and of matching their DNA with DNA recovered from other members of the Danish royal house buried in Denmark, or (in the case of Harthacnut) at Winchester.¹⁰⁰ Moved four times in nearly a thousand years but disturbed by only one episode of disorder, the remains of King Cnut and his family may yet have more to tell us in the millennium to come.

Postscript

In September 2012, the six surviving wooden mortuary chests standing on the presbytery choir screens in Winchester Cathedral were taken down and removed to the Lady Chapel. There, the chests have been digitally scanned and their construction, paintwork, metal fittings, and inscriptions subjected to detailed preliminary investigation. Following further examination and conservation, the chests will be replaced on the choir screens.

The bones in the chests are now the subject of full anthropological and forensic investigation.

Notes to Table 12.2

1. For convenience, the dates are those given in Fryde *et al.* (eds), *Handbook of British Chronology*.
2. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, written c.1450; the chests are the two surviving sixteenth-century chests on the south side of the presbytery (S2 and S3) and the two replacement chests of 1661 at the west end of the north and south sides (N1 and S1).
3. *Liber Vitae*, pp. 17–18, 81, fol. 9r. Alfred was buried first in Old Minster in 899 and translated to New Minster c.903.
4. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 872, mentions only Alfred's burial in New Minster.
5. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 208, mentions Alfred's burial in Old Minster and his translation to New Minster.
6. *Liber Vitae*, pp. 19 and 81, fol. 9v. Edward was buried on the right-hand side of the altar where the burials of his parents had been placed some time before. See also JW, pp. 384–85. Edward's remains were translated to Hyde Abbey c.1110: see above, p. 228.
7. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 901.
8. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 211.
9. JW, s.a. 940, pp. 394–95.
10. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 924.
11. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 214.
12. JW, s.a. 946, pp. 398–99.
13. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, 214.
14. ASC D, s.a. 955; cf. JW, s.a. 955, pp. 404–405.
15. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 946.
16. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 215.
17. *Liber Vitae*, pp. 24 and 81, fol. 10r; JW, s.a. 959, pp. 408–409.
18. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 216.
19. JW, s.a. 975, pp. 424–25.
20. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 959 (p. 13).
21. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 223.
22. ASC E, s.a. 979; JW, s.a. 978, pp. 428–31.
23. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 975.
24. But see Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 225, where the relevant text is omitted by Wharton.
25. JW, s.a. 1016, pp. 484–85.
26. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 979 (p. 14).
27. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, 227.
28. For Swein, see now P. H. Sawyer, 'Swein (d. 1014)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26830>>. King of Denmark, c.986–1014. According to ASC E, s.a. 1014, and JW, s.a. 1014, pp. 476–7, Swein died at Gainsborough (Lincs.). A phrase added to a MS of Simeon of Durham, *Historia regum*, s.a. 1014, who is here otherwise following JW, states that Swein was buried at York (Simeon of Durham, *Historia regum*, in T. Arnold (ed.), *Symeonis monachi opera omnia*, RS 75 (London, 2 vols, 1882–5), Vol. 2, p. 146). According to the *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, II.3, pp. 18–19, an Englishwoman translated Swein's body by ship from England to his brothers, Cnut and Harald, in Denmark where he was buried in the grave he had prepared for himself in the monastery of the Holy Trinity which he had founded. This is usually supposed to be at Roskilde, but may have been the church of the Holy Trinity at Lund in Scania where recent excavations have uncovered immediately in front of the high altar of the second timber church (c.1000–20) the foot end of an empty grave (M. Cinthio, *De första stadsborna: medeltida gravar och människor i Lund* (Eslöv, 2002), pp. 29–35, Feature 'F' on plan, p. 32). The body had later been removed, probably to a new grave in the first stone church (built c.1020). We are grateful to Dr Michael Andersen, at the National Museum in Copenhagen, for his advice in advance of his entry on Swein Forkbeard to *Danske Kongegrave* (Copenhagen, 2014; see p. 241, n. 1).
29. ASC DEF, s.a. 1016, and JW, s.a. 1016, pp. 492–93, according to which he was buried there with his grandfather Edgar.
30. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 979 [!] (p. 15).
31. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 229.
32. Possibly because part of his body may have been translated from Glastonbury to the Old Minster by Cnut in 1032: for the twelfth-century Purbeck marble grave slab with his name and the mortuary chest (S3) apparently intended to hold his bones, see Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', p. 298, n. 44; Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', p. 167 and n. 3; and see now here, pp. 224–26 and Fig. 12.10b.
33. ASC CD, s.a. 1035, at Winchester; ASC E, s.a. 1036, adds in Old Minster; JW, pp. 520–21; Crook "'Worthy Antiquity'".
34. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 235.
35. ASC EF, s.a. 1039; JW, s.a. 1040, pp. 528–29. Harold's body was exhumed on Harthacnut's instructions, thrown into a marsh, and then into the Thames. It was recovered and reburied in the cemetery the Danes had in London: JW, pp. 530–31.
36. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1039.
37. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 235.
38. ASC EF, s.a. 1041; JW, s.a. 1042, pp. 534–35.
39. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1040 (p. 18).
40. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, 236. Harthacnut's tomb survives, possibly untouched since the late eleventh century, beneath the north screen of the presbytery in Winchester Cathedral (Figure 12.21; Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', p. 266). The statement that his bones were once in one of the chests placed on the presbytery screens seems to be a confusion.
41. ASC CD, s.a. 1065; ASC E, s.a. 1066; JW, s.a. 1066, pp. 600–601 (not mentioning Westminster); Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, pp. 253–54.
42. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1066.
43. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 240.
44. For the possibilities, which do not exclude Waltham, see F. Barlow (ed. and trans.), *The Carmen de Hastingae Proelio of Guy, Bishop of Amiens* (Oxford, 1999), pp. lxxxv–lxxxvi and 34–35; Barlow, *The Godwins*, pp. 112–14; and cf. WM, *GRA*, iii.247.2 (pp. 460–61) and R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury: Gesta Regum Anglorum: Volume II: General Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 1999), p. 236.
45. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1066.
46. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 243.
47. ASC E, s.a. 1086; Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 361–63.
48. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1087.
49. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 262.
50. ASC E s.a. 1100; Barlow, *William Rufus*, pp. 420–31; Crook, 'Rufus Tomb'.
51. *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1100.
52. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 270.

Appendix: the graves of the Danish rulers of England

1. Cnut (*Canute the Great; Knud I, den Store, of Denmark and Norway*)

Born c.995, died 12 November 1035 at Shaftesbury.

Parents: King Swein Forkbeard and Queen Gunhild (daughter of Mieszko I and sister of Boleslav Chrobry, kings of Poland).

‘Married’ first: c.1016? Ælfgifu of Northampton (concubine) (born c.996, died after c.1038?), daughter of Ælfhelm ealdorman of southern Northumbria (died 1006) and Wulfrun. Ælfgifu had been set aside in favour of Emma by July 1017.¹⁰⁰

Married second: July 1017 (at Winchester?) Emma of Normandy, widow of Æthelred II, king of England.

Reigned: 1016–35 in England (chosen king of England by the Danish fleet, February 1014, but failed to establish himself there until the autumn of 1016, when he secured England north of the Thames; king of all England from December 1016); 1018–35 in Denmark; 1028–34/5 in Norway.

Buried in the Anglo-Saxon Old Minster at Winchester, 1035; translated into the new Norman cathedral, 1093.

After a reign of nearly nineteen years in England, Cnut died at Shaftesbury on 10 November 1035. He was carried the 70 km (43 miles) to Winchester and buried with royal honours in the Anglo-Saxon cathedral church of Old Minster,¹⁰² probably in the great eastern apse behind the high altar (Figures 12.2 and 12.4). Here, over the next sixteen years, his son Harthacnut, his wife Emma, and his nephew Beorn were laid beside him, so that the apse of Old Minster came to be the burial place of the Anglo-Danish royal house.

For the next four hundred years we have no direct knowledge about what happened to Cnut’s remains. It seems probable (as argued above) that his body was moved from Old Minster into the east end of

the new Norman cathedral in 1093 and placed in a position of the greatest honour beside the reliquary of St Swithun, between the piers of the arcade surrounding the presbytery (Figure 12.6A). Here his remains were perhaps preserved in a lead chest inscribed with his name.¹⁰³

Cnut’s remains rested here for over two centuries but, following the rebuilding of the presbytery in the early fourteenth century, his chest was probably placed on top of the new screen wall across the east end of the presbytery, very close to the position in which it had been since 1093 (Figure 12.6B). The screen commemorated the benefactors of the cathedral (Figure 12.7), and here, among the *corpora sanctorum*, ‘the bodies of the saints’, on pedestals inscribed *Cnutus Rex* and *Hardecnutus Rex filius eius*, were statuettes, now missing, of Cnut and Harthacnut (Figures 12.13–14).¹⁰⁴

By about 1450 Cnut’s lead box was by the door of the south crypt, that is to say at the entry into the south aisle of the crypt from the west end of the south aisle of the presbytery:

... sepultus fuit regio more ante maius altare Veteri Cænobio modo vero ossa ipsius reconditur in locello plumbeo circa ostium meridionalis cryptae, et ex utraque parte locelli ponitur iste versus:

Moribus imbutus, hic iacet nomine Knutus.

... he was buried in royal manner before the high altar in Old Minster, but his bones are now enclosed in a lead box near the door of the south crypt, and on each side of the box is placed this verse:

Full of good works, here lies one Cnut by name.¹⁰⁵

This lead box may have been a recent replacement, but it is also possible that it dated from the translation of 1093, and that the inscription reflects the epitaph on Cnut’s tomb in Old Minster.

In or shortly after 1525, when Bishop Fox provided new wooden chests for the remains of the kings and bishops and placed them on top of his new presbytery screens, Cnut’s supposed remains seem to have been placed together with those of William Rufus in a single chest on the south screen:

Hic jacent Ossa Cnutonis et Willielmi Rufi

Here lie the bones of Cnut and William Rufus.¹⁰⁶

In 1635, however, Cnut's bones were recorded as being together in the same chest as those of Harthacnut, 'both in one ... with their Crownes on the top', and on the south side.¹⁰⁷ This contradicts both the inscription just quoted and a late sixteenth-century list, and Harthacnut's name was not repeated when replacement chests were inscribed in 1684–92.¹⁰⁸ Whatever the truth, this chest was one of the six destroyed, with bones scattered, by Parliamentary soldiers in 1642.

In 1661, the surviving bones from the six destroyed chests, including that containing Cnut and Rufus, were put in two new chests, one on the north and one on the south screen (Figures 12.16 and 12.18). These chests were not at first labelled but by 1684–92 an inscription had been painted on both the new chests stating that the *reliquiae ossium*, 'the remains of the bones', of Cnut were enclosed with those of King William Rufus, Queen Emma, and the Bishops Wine and Ælfwine (Figure 12.16). There seems to have been no idea whose bones were whose, the new inscriptions simply reflecting memories and perhaps records of those destroyed in 1642. It is significant that these new inscriptions do not mention Harthacnut.

The bones have remained in these chests ever since (Figures 12.19–20), but whether any of them are actually the bones of King Cnut it is impossible on present knowledge to say.¹⁰⁹

2. Emma [of Normandy] (known officially in England as Ælfgyfu)

Born 980s in Normandy, died 6 March 1052 at Winchester.

Parents: Richard I duke of Normandy (born [date?], ruled 942–6) and Gunnor [dates?].

Married first: spring 1002, Æthelred II king of England (born 968/9, reigned 978/9–1016).

Married second: July 1017 (at Winchester?)

Cnut king of England (1016–35), Denmark (1018–35), and Norway (1028–34/5).

Buried in the Anglo-Saxon Old Minster at Winchester 'with' her husband, 1052; translated into the new Norman cathedral, 1093.

Having survived her husband for more than sixteen years, Emma died at Winchester on 6 March 1052 and was buried in Old Minster 'with King Cnut',¹¹⁰ her son Harthacnut, and her nephew Beorn. When Old Minster was demolished in 1093, her remains were presumably translated into the east end of the new Norman cathedral together with those of her husband, her son Harthacnut, and her husband's nephew Beorn, but we know little of what happened to Emma's bones for the next five centuries. As argued above, her remains and Cnut's were probably placed in the presbytery in a position of the greatest honour beside St Swithun, where they remained for more than two centuries (Figure 12.6A). When the presbytery was rebuilt in the early fourteenth century, her remains and Cnut's were probably kept in more or less the same place on top of the new screen at the east end of the presbytery where her name was listed among the benefactors of the cathedral (Figures 12.6B and 12.7).

The name *Emma regina* is next recorded on one of Bishop Fox's ten new chests in a late sixteenth-century list of 'Certain monuments newly set up and on high above their old positions' (*Quaedam Monumenta noviter et in alto redacta supra Locos antiquos*).¹¹¹ The arrangement of the list indicates that at this time her remains lay on their own in a single chest, probably on top of the north side of the presbytery. They had probably been there since 1525. It may have been during this time, but more probably earlier, that five lines of verse were painted below her chest on the north wall of the presbytery, facing inwards towards the quire:

Hic Emmam cista Reginam continet ista,
Duxit Etheldredus Rex hanc, et postea Cnutus;
Edwardum parit haec, ac Hardi-canutum
Quatuor hos Reges haec vidit Sceptra tenentes;
Anglorum Regum fuit haec sic Mater et Uxor.

This chest here contains Emma the Queen.
 Æthelred married her and afterwards Cnut.
 She bore Edward and Harthacnut.
 She saw these four kings hold the sceptre.
 Thus was she mother and wife of kings of the English.

These verses do not seem to be recorded before c.1600,¹¹² but they echo some words which Thomas Rudborne wrote in his *Historia Maior* in the mid fifteenth century, under the year 1052:

Emma Regina uxor Regum Angliae Etheldredi & Cnutonis, & mater Regum Angliae Hardecanuti & Sancti Edwardi, obiit.

Queen Emma, wife of the kings of England Æthelred and Cnut, and mother of the kings of England Harthacnut and St Edward, died.¹¹³

In 1635 she appears again: 'On the North side is Queen Emma, and her Sonne, and 4 Saxon Bishops'.¹¹⁴ Eight years later in February 1643 'Emma the Mother, and Edward the Confessor her Sonne' were listed by Bruno Ryves among Bishop Fox's chests, 'with inscriptions on each Chest, whose bodies lay within them'. Sadly, in sacking the cathedral the previous December, the Parliamentary soldiers 'on the North side of the Quire ... threw down the Chests, wherein were deposited ... the bones of ... Queen Emma, of Hardecanutus, and Edward the Confessor ...'.¹¹⁵ Not surprisingly, Ryves's account is muddled. The Confessor is buried in Westminster Abbey and Harthacnut has his own separate tomb in Winchester Cathedral, beneath the north screen (Figs 12.21–2), rather than in a chest on top of it.¹¹⁶ But Emma's bones, or those supposed to be hers, were indeed thrown down and scattered.

Like Cnut's supposed remains, Emma's bones were apparently gathered together in 1661 and placed with others in two new chests, both at first uninscribed.¹¹⁷ Twenty years later, in 1684–92, new inscriptions were provided saying that the chests contained the remains of her bones along with those of her husband Cnut and others (Figures 12.15–17).¹¹⁸

The bones have remained in these chests ever since (Figures 12.19–20), but whether any of

them are actually the bones of Queen Emma it is impossible on present knowledge to say.

3. Harthacnut (*Hardicanute*, *Hardeknud*)

Born c.1018, died 8 June 1042 at Lambeth.

Parents: King Cnut and Queen Emma.

No known marriage.

Reigned: 1035–42 in Denmark (titular king from c.1028?); 1040–2 in England (acknowledged as king from late 1035 or early 1036 until 1037; effective king from June 1040).

Buried in the Anglo-Saxon Old Minster at Winchester 'with' his father, 1042; translated into the new Norman cathedral, 1093.

In 1042, Harthacnut was standing drinking with the bride and some male guests at a marriage feast at Lambeth on the south bank of the Thames opposite Westminster,

merry, in good health, and in great heart ... when he suddenly crashed to the ground in a wretched fall while drinking. He remained speechless until his death on Tuesday, 8 June.¹¹⁹

He was carried the 100 km (62 miles) to Winchester, and buried in Old Minster next to (with) his father, King Cnut,¹²⁰ probably in the eastern apse behind the high altar where his mother Emma and his cousin Beorn were later to lie.¹²¹ When Old Minster was demolished in 1093, Harthacnut's body was presumably translated into the east end of the new Norman cathedral, together with the bodies of the other members of his family.

We know nothing of the location of Harthacnut's remains for the next three hundred years. It may be that they were with Cnut and Emma throughout this period. Certainly, Harthacnut is named together with Cnut on the pedestals of two statuettes (both now missing) in the northernmost niche of the early fourteenth-century screen commemorating benefactors (Figures 12.13–14). By this date at least, therefore, Harthacnut's remains were apparently believed to be preserved in or near the presbytery of the cathedral. His name does not appear on the late



Figure 12.19. The northern mortuary chest of 1661, showing the bones, said to include those of Cnut and Emma, placed in the oak chest provided in 1932, looking west. (Photograph © John Crook)

sixteenth-century list of those whose monuments were 'newly set up and on high above their old positions', suggesting that his bones were not at that date in one of Bishop Fox's chests.¹²² In 1635, however, his remains were recorded as being together with those of his father Cnut in one of Fox's chests on the south side of the quire, and it may have been from there that they were thrown down and scattered in 1642.¹²³

There are several difficulties with this interpretation. First, in the mid fifteenth century the inscription on the lead chest on the *south* side containing Cnut's bones did not mention Harthacnut.¹²⁴ Second, Bruno Ryves' detailed account of the events of 1642 says that Harthacnut's bones were among those thrown down with the chests from the *north* side of the quire.¹²⁵ Third, when the scattered bones were put in new



Figure 12.20. The southern mortuary chest of 1661, showing the bones, said to include those of Cnut and Emma, placed in the pine chest provided in 1932, looking east. (Photograph © John Crook)

chests in 1661 and labelled in 1684–92, Harthacnut was not among those named (Figures 12.15–17).¹²⁶

A much more difficult problem is posed by the presence of a tomb belonging to Harthacnut in the north screen of the presbytery (Figures 12.21–2),



Figure 12.21 (above). The north screen of the presbytery, 1525, with the tomb of Harthacnut, looking south-east. (Photograph © John Crook)



Figure 12.22 (left). The tomb of Harthacnut, c.1525. (Photograph © John Crook)

a tomb which shows no signs of having been broken into and rifled. The screens were built in 1525 by Bishop Fox in association with the prior of the cathedral monastery and others. The screens incorporated six earlier tombs, one of which was Harthacnut's, whose tomb was provided with a completely new tomb-plaque in the north face of the north screen, immediately north of the high altar. The decoration of the plaque is restricted to foliage of an early Renaissance type framing the panel carrying the inscription (Figure 12.22). This reads, in roman capitals,

Qui iacet hic/regni sceptrum tulit/Hardicanutus/
Emmæ, Cnutonis/gnatus & ipse fuit./Obiit A.D.
1042.

Harthacnut who lies here carried the sceptre of the kingdom, and was himself born of Emma and Cnut. He died AD 1042.

The inscription is flanked by two shields, one blank, the one on the left charged with a late medieval warship, an emblem perhaps of the sixty ships manned with Danish troops which accompanied Harthacnut to England from Bruges in midsummer 1040 when he came at the invitation of the English ambassadors to receive the 'sceptre of the realm' (*sceptra regni*).¹²⁷ The blank shield may be an allusion to the following words of the *Chronicle* that 'he did nothing worthy of a king as long as he ruled'.¹²⁸

It seems likely that remains of an earlier tomb and its contents may survive behind the tomb-plaque or within the plinth below (Figures 12.21–2), since burials have been found in this position in three of the other six tombs in the screens, including the tomb immediately next to Harthacnut's.¹²⁹ Nothing can at present be seen of any earlier structure belonging to Harthacnut's tomb, but if his coffin does lie behind the tomb-plaque or within the plinth, his body may rest there still today.

As we have seen above, there are grounds for believing that Harthacnut did indeed lie in the east end of the presbytery since the moment when his remains and those of his family were first moved into the new Norman cathedral in 1093.¹³⁰ The difference

is that he and Beorn, unlike Cnut and Emma, may have lain in their tombs ever since, undisturbed except by changes associated with the rebuilding of the presbytery in the early fourteenth century and the construction of Fox's screens in 1525.

There is no good reason to believe that Harthacnut's bones were ever in one of Bishop Fox's chests. The confusion may in part have arisen from references to 'King Canutus, and his Son Hardicanute' on one of the chests and 'Queen Emma and her Sonne' on another.¹³¹ These pairings may themselves have been suggested by names carved on the fourteenth-century screen of benefactors, where Harthacnut appears together with his father Cnut in a single niche (cf. Figures 12.13–14). Edward the Confessor, who was also Emma's son, is there, but only as a benefactor. He was not buried at Winchester, but rests famously, and has done since the day after his death, in the abbey church he built at Westminster.

Notes

1. This paper is a slightly expanded and updated version of a chapter completed by us in 2005 with the title 'Danske kongegrave i Winchester: Knud den Store og hans familie' in *Danske Kongegrave*, ed. Karin Kryger, issued by Selskabet til Udgivelse af danske Mindesmærker (The Society for the Publication of Danish Monuments), Museum Tusculanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2014. We are grateful to Karin Kryger for permission to publish this revised English version.
2. For Cnut, Harthacnut and Emma, see the individual entries which follow. Beorn's murder and burial at Dartmouth (Dev.), and his translation to Winchester are recorded in *ASC* C, s.a. 1049; D, s.a. 1050; E, s.a. 1046 (*recte* 1049); and his murder and burial but not his translation in *JW*, s.a. 1049, pp. 550–51. (Refs. to the text of *ASC* herein are from C. Plummer (ed.), *Two of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles Parallel* (Oxford, 1892; reissued, 1952), Vols 1 and 2. Short reference to text in Vol. 1, *ASC*, followed by the letter identifying the text used, e.g. A, with the date of the annal (s.a., 'sub anno') where the item appears, and an indication of the corrected year (*recte*) where appropriate.
3. See above, pp. 224–26. Richard son of William the Conqueror was added to this group c.1070, see above, p. 224.
4. This looks like a deliberate choice on Edward's part,

- for he might as well have chosen that she should lie in St. Paul's, London, beside her first husband and Edward's father, King Æthelred (JW, s.a. 1016, pp. 484–85).
5. *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*, ed. S. D. Keynes, *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile* 26 (Copenhagen, 1996), pp. 16–22, and 81, fols 8r–v; *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, ed. M. Biddle, *Winchester Studies* 1 (Oxford, 1976), pp. 313–21; M. Biddle and B. Kjølbye-Biddle, 'The Dating of the New Minster Wall Painting', in *Early Medieval Wall Painting and Painted Sculpture in England*, ed. S. Cather, D. Park and P. Williamson, *BAR British Ser.* 216 (Oxford, 1990), pp. 45–62, at pp. 57–62.
 6. JW, s.a. 901, pp. 352–55, with references to *ASC* and other sources; cf. *ASC*, ed. Plummer, Vol. 2, pp. 112–14; *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, pp. 17–18 and 81, fol. 9r.
 7. *ASC* A, s.a. 904 (*recte* 902), C, s.a. 902; cf. *ASC*, ed. Plummer, Vol. 2, p. 117; *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, pp. 18 and 81, fol. 9r.
 8. *ASC* Mercian Register (MS D), s.a. 924; JW, s.a. 924, pp. 384–85; *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, pp. 19 and 81, fol. 9v. For Æthelweard, see JW, s.a. 922, pp. 382–83, n. 6; *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, p. 19, n. 39, and p. 83, fol. 9v: he died in 922 or perhaps more likely 920, four years before his brother the king.
 9. This is the implication of the statements concerning the individual places of burial given in *Liber Vitae* and the other sources given in nn.5–7.
 10. There were at least six earlier royal burials in Old Minster, beginning with the first Christian king of Wessex, Cynegils (d.642; translated from Dorchester on Thames, Oxon.) and ending with Eadred (d.955): Biddle and Keene in *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Biddle, p. 290, n.3. Nothing is known of the location of their graves, which may in any case have been moved in the great rebuilding of Old Minster between 971 and 992–4. The burials took place at long intervals and there is no sign that any of them were part of a family group comparable to that of the family of the famous Alfred in New Minster.
 11. Richard of Devizes (*fl.* c.1200), *Winchester Annals* (*Annales monasterii de Wintonia*), s.a. 1079, 1093, and 1094, in *Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, RS 36 (London, 5 vols, 1864–9), Vol. 2, pp. 3–125, at pp. 32 and 37–38. For these annals, see J. T. Appleby, 'Richard of Devizes and the Annals of Winchester', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 36 (1963), pp. 70–77.
 12. For the historical Swithun and the development of his cult, see M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, *Winchester Studies* 4.2 (Oxford, 2003), pp. 3–65.
 13. *ASC* CDE, s.a. 1012; JW, s.a. 1012, pp. 470–71. See A. Williams, 'Thorkell the Tall and the Bubble Reputation: the Vicissitudes of Fame', above, p. 147.
 14. B. Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Old Minster, St. Swithun's Day 1093', in *Winchester Cathedral: Nine Hundred Years 1093–1993*, ed. J. Crook (Chichester, 1993), pp. 13–20; B. Kjølbye-Biddle and M. Biddle, *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester*, *Winchester Studies* 4.1 (Oxford, in press), Part 2, ch. 11.
 15. M. Biddle and B. Kjølbye-Biddle, 'The Excavated Sculptures from Winchester', in D. Tweddle, M. Biddle and B. Kjølbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV, South-East England* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 96–107 and 273–327, at pp. 99–102, figure 27.
 16. Tweddle, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, pp. 314–22 (no. 88), Illustrations 642–49; Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, illus. 104–107 (no. 89).
 17. The comparison with the Bayeux Tapestry was made as soon as the carving was found (M. Biddle, 'A Late Saxon Frieze Sculpture from Old Minster', *Antiquaries Journal* 46 (1966), pp. 329–32, at pp. 329 and 332). Three points are relevant: both are friezes; both show a method of scene division whereby one figure turns its back on another; and they share similarities in figure shape, hair style, dress, and accoutrements: see Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, illus. 104.
 18. The tomb structure built around St. Swithun's grave in c.980, arguably the most important monument in Old Minster, measured less than 3 m in its longest dimension at foundation level: Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, figures 38–39.
 19. Biddle, 'Late Saxon Frieze Sculpture', pp. 330–31.
 20. R. G. Finch (ed.), *Völsunga Saga: the Saga of the Volsungs* (London, 1965), pp. 7–8.
 21. In the passage in *Beowulf* (*Beowulf: an Edition with Relevant Shorter Texts*, ed. B. Mitchell and F. C. Robinson (Oxford, 1998) lines 875–96, p. 77, n.), the scop is described as singing 'all he knew of famous Sigemund, his feats of courage, many strange things, the Wælsings' [Volsungs'] strife, far-off journeys, feuds and crimes unknown to men ...'. This is a fair summary of the saga of the Volsungs, meaningless to his audience unless they knew the tales. For the former existence of an 'early-eighth-century archetype' of *Beowulf*, see M. Lapidge, 'The Archetype of Beowulf', *ASE* 29 (2000), pp. 5–41, at pp. 34–41; see also T.

- Shippey, 'The Merov(ich)ingian Again: *damnatio memoriae* and the *usus scholarum*', in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, ed. K. O'Brien O'Keefe and A. Orchard (Toronto, 2 vols, 2005), Vol. 1, pp. 389–406, at pp. 401–402.
22. Volsunga Saga itself contains two specific descriptions of narrative hangings, one embroidered by Brynhild which showed the deeds of Sigurd, and one woven by Gudrun which illustrated among other actions the fight of Sigar and Siggeir and the ship of Sigmund sailing along the land: *Volsunga Saga*, ed. Finch, pp. 42 and 62.
 23. After the death of Ealdorman Byrhtnoth at the Battle of Maldon in Essex in 991, his widow Ælflæd gave to the monastery at Ely a number of lands, a golden collar, 'and a hanging woven upon and embroidered with the deeds of her husband in memory of his probity' (*et cortinam gestis viri sui intextam atque depositam, depictam in memoriam probitatis eius*). *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Royal Historical Society, Camden 3rd Ser. 92 (London, 1962), p. 136; trans. J. Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth*, Compiled by a Monk of Ely in the Twelfth Century (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 163.
 24. Cf. *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed. A. Campbell, Camden 3rd Ser. 72 (London, 1949), pp. 32–35.
 25. It has been the subject of much debate (see Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, in *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, pp. 318–22), but the suggestion has now been favourably reviewed, e.g. by Isobel Henderson in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49 (1998), p. 159, and by Rachel Moss in *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 155 (2002), pp. 302–304.
 26. As was suggested when the frieze was first published: Biddle, 'Late Saxon Frieze Sculpture', p. 331.
 27. Preparations for making a royal burial place in Old Minster may be reflected in the gifts given by Cnut and Emma to Old Minster, not least in the grant of land in Somerset in 1033, conceivably as an endowment for the saying of prayers, masses, and psalms at his tomb: cf. Lawson, *Cnut*, p. 113 (quoting a grant to the monks of Sherborne in 1035), p. 154.
 28. B. Kjølbye-Biddle and R. I. Page, 'A Scandinavian Rune-Stone from Winchester', *Antiquaries Journal* 55 (1975), pp. 389–94; D. Tweddle and M. P. Barnes, 'Winchester, Ha. (St. Maurice)', in *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, pp. 327–28, Illus. 667–70 (wrongly reconstructed in figure 42 as part of a grave-cover rather than a grave-marker); Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, Part VII, illus. 114 (No. 109).
 29. Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol. IV*, pp. 278–80, illus. 509–13 and 521; Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, Part VII, illus. 113 (No. 106).
 30. Richard of Devizes, *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1093 and 1094, ed. Luard, pp. 37–38. Since the annal for 1093 specifically states that only the great altar and one porticus were not demolished that year, the altar under which the relics were found in 1094 (*sub altari veteris monasterii*) must have been the great altar. These 'saints' were probably not saints *sensu stricto*, but rather the remains of the important dead: in the fourteenth century the bodies of the kings, bishops, and a queen were described as *corpora sanctorum*, see above, p. 229.
 31. The holes for the scaffold used to build the walls of the nave and north tower of the Norman west front were covered by the plaster surface of the 'memorial court'. This shows that the walls had at least been raised to the point where the higher levels could be built from 'flying scaffolds' resting on beams set into slots in the walls: i.e. some time had elapsed between the demolition of the westwork of Old Minster and the laying of the 'memorial court'.
 32. For the memorial court and the question of whose graves were preserved *in situ* around the site of St. Swithun's original grave, see Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, Part V, ch. 2.
 33. Richard of Devizes, *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1111 and 1150, ed. Luard, pp. 44 and 54.
 34. See above, p. 229.
 35. T. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, in *Anglia Sacra*, Vol. 1, ed. H. Wharton (London, 1691), pp. 177–286, at p. 194. Robert was prior of Winchester 1165–73 and abbot of Glastonbury from 1173 until his death in 1180. For a version of this quotation, taken from the mid fifteenth-century *Liber historialis*, see J. Crook, '“A Worthy Antiquity”: the Movement of King Cnut's Bones in Winchester Cathedral', in *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. R. Rumble (London, 1994), pp. 165–91, at p. 186. The names of the Anglo-Saxon kings and queen given by Rudborne here and elsewhere were probably not taken from Robert's *libellus*, but represent Rudborne's reading of the names painted on the lead boxes (see above, p. 230): some are not otherwise recorded as having been buried in Winchester.
 36. A. W. Goodman (ed.), *Chartulary of Winchester Cathedral* (Winchester, 1927), No. 4 (p. 3); Latin text in Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', pp. 180–81; cf. G. R. C. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain* (London,

- 1958), No. 1044 (p. 120). The verb *fuertunt* in the text is incorrect: either *erunt*, 'were', or *fuertant*, 'had been' was intended, probably the latter given the use of the prefix *fu-*. We are grateful to John Crook and Richard Sharpe for their comments, but the decision to opt for *fuertant* is our own.
37. For the memorial court, see above, pp. 217–18. This suggestion was first made by Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', pp. 173–76 and 181.
 38. See above, p. 217.
 39. See above, p. 219 and n. 35.
 40. Dr John Crook has asked us to state that he fully agrees with this new interpretation, which he has incorporated in his contribution, 'The Shrine of St. Swithun in the Norman and Later Cathedral', in Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, Part IX.
 41. For St Swithun's shrine in the Norman and later cathedral, see J. Crook, 'St Swithun of Winchester', in *Winchester Cathedral: Nine Hundred Years*, ed. Crook, pp. 57–68, especially figs 6.2 and 6.3; and Crook in Kjølbye-Biddle and Biddle, *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, Part IX.
 42. M. Biddle, 'Early Renaissance at Winchester', in *Winchester Cathedral: Nine Hundred Years*, ed. Crook, pp. 257–304, at pp. 263–71. Earl Beorn and Richard son of William the Conqueror were by this date already in one tomb, see above, pp. 225–27, Figures 12.9–12.
 43. The first three Norman bishops, Walkelin (d.1098), Giffard (d.1129), and Henry of Blois (d.1171) were buried along the central axis of the nave and presbytery: Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, pp. 256, 279, 282, and 285–86; *Waverley Annals*, 239, s.a. 1171. For the probable identification of the tomb of Henry of Blois with the coped Purbeck marble coffin on the axis of the presbytery, see Crook, 'Rufus Tomb', and cf. E. Crowfoot, 'Textiles', in M. Biddle, *Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester*, Winchester Studies 7.2 (Oxford, 2 parts, 1990), Part 2, pp. 477–79 and 486–88. Of the eight bishops who died between 1188 and the reconstruction of the Norman presbytery in c.1310–15, four were buried and still have tombs to north or south of the presbytery. The evidence comes from contemporary chronicles and from Rudborne's *Historia Maior*. The former describe the position before the reconstruction of the presbytery in c.1310–15; the latter relates to the middle of the fifteenth century, before the erection of Fox's screens. Of the four bishops buried in the presbytery, Aymer de Valence (d.1260; cf. Lindley, 'Medieval Sculpture', pp. 101–102, fig. 9.5) on the north and Nicholas of Ely (d.1280) on the south side are represented by heart-burials, their bodies resting where they died, in Paris and at Waverley Abbey, respectively; Richard Toclyve (d.1188) and John of Pontoise (d.1304) were both buried on the north side (Figure 12.6A). Of the other four bishops, two (Godfrey de Lucy (d.1204) and Peter des Roches (d.1238; cf. P. Lindley, 'The Medieval Sculpture of Winchester Cathedral', in *Winchester Cathedral Nine Hundred Years*, ed. Crook, pp. 97–122, at p. 102, figure 9.6), were buried elsewhere in the cathedral; and two (William de Ralegh (d.1250) and John of Exeter (d.1268)) were buried abroad.
 44. J. Crook, 'The Romanesque East Arm and Crypt of Winchester Cathedral', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 142 (1989), pp. 1–36; 'Bishop Walkelin's Cathedral', and P. Draper and R. K. Morris, 'The Development of the East End of Winchester Cathedral from the 13th to the 16th Century', both in *Winchester Cathedral Nine Hundred Years*, ed. Crook, pp. 21–36, and pp. 177–92, at pp. 182–89.
 45. Crook, 'St. Swithun of Winchester', pp. 59–60, figures 6.2–6.4.
 46. For the pattern, see Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', table on p. 264.
 47. See below, pp. 224–26.
 48. Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', p. 299, n. 59.
 49. See above, pp. 217–19.
 50. William may have visited his great aunt, then about seventy, when he visited England in the autumn or winter of 1051, shortly before her death. It was about this time, and possibly on this occasion, that he received from Edward the Confessor some sort of undertaking that he was to succeed him: F. Barlow, *Edward the Confessor* (London, 1970; 2nd edn, 1997), pp. 116–17; cf. D. C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror* (London, 1964), p. 169. For a recent reconsideration of this episode, see S. Baxter, 'MS C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Politics of Mid-Eleventh-Century England', *EHR* 122 (2007), pp. 1189–227, at pp. 1205–206.
 51. W. T. Warren, *Illustrated Guide to Winchester* (London and Winchester, 1909), pp. 64–65; Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', pp. 266 and 298, n. 51. John Crook has recently discovered in the cathedral archives F. J. Baigent's original drawings of the opening of the tomb, and of the lead coffin with its inscription (Figs 12.11–12).
 52. See above, p. 212. Fox's inscription over their tomb niche gives Richard the fictitious title *BEORNIE DVCIS*, 'Duke of Beornia' (Figure 12.9). This caused much difficulty to early antiquaries until the error was

- corrected by Henry Howard in 1797, as quoted by J. Milner, *The History, Civil and Ecclesiastical, and Survey of the Antiquities of Winchester* (Winchester, 2 vols, 1798), Vol. 2, pp. 54–55, n.3). Unfortunately John Vaughan, *Winchester Cathedral. Its Monuments and Memorials* (London, n.d. [1919]), p. 82, perpetuated the error and it is still to be heard.
53. F. Barlow, *William Rufus* (London, 1983), p. 13 and n. 37, and pp. 441–45. Like his younger brother William II in 1100, Richard died while hunting in the New Forest, some 30 km from Winchester.
 54. We are most grateful to Professor Sandy Heslop, University of East Anglia, for his opinion that the letter forms are consistent with a date in the late eleventh century.
 55. William II Rufus was at Dover, Rochester, Windsor, Wilton, and Gloucester during the summer of 1093, and at Winchester before 25 September: Barlow, *William Rufus*, p. 450.
 56. The use of the obsolete Old English letter þ, ‘thorn’, confused medieval readers. Rudborne, for example, read the name of Edmund’s father as ‘Aldredus’, arguing that this was a form of Alfred, and identified Edmund as the eldest son of King Alfred (d.899), a son for whom there is otherwise no evidence: *Historia Maior*, p. 207; E. B. Fryde, D. E. Greenway, S. Porter and I. Roy (eds), *Handbook of British Chronology*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 2 (London, 3rd edn, 1986), pp. 24–25.
 57. ASCCDE, s.a. 1016; WM, *GRA*, 180.9, pp. 318–19, and Vol. 2, p. 165, n. 2; cf. E. A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England* (Oxford, 5 vols, 1867–77), Vol. 1, pp. 398–400 and 711–17.
 58. WM, *GRA*, 184.2, cf. 181.2. The accounts of this incident in WM, *De ant. Glas.*, pp. 132–33, and in *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey. An edition, Translation and Study of John of Glastonbury’s Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie*, ed. J. P. Carley (Woodbridge, 1985), pp. 148–49, may be derivative and seem in any case to have been tampered with: see Scott in *De Antiquitate*, p. 205, n. 130, and M. Blows, ‘A Glastonbury Obbit-List’, in *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey. Essays in Honour of the Ninetieth Birthday of C. A. Raleigh Radford*, ed. L. Abrams and J. P. Carley (Woodbridge, 1991), 257–69, at pp. 267–68.
 59. M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London, 1993), pp. 138–39.
 60. WM, *De ant. Glas.*, pp. 84–85; John of Glastonbury, *Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis*, ed. Carley, pp. 30–31 and 148–49; John Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535–1543*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (London, 5 vols, 1964), Vol. 1, p. 288. Edmund’s tomb lay originally before the high altar, but was later on the south side of the presbytery, having perhaps been moved to allow King Edward I to translate the supposed remains of Arthur and Guinevere to a site before the high altar in 1278: T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London, 1950), pp. 96–98; E. K. Chambers, *Arthur of Britain* (London, 1927), pp. 125–27; R. S. Loomis, ‘Edward I, Arthurian Enthusiast’, *Speculum* 28 (1953), pp. 114–27.
 61. See above, pp. 212–13.
 62. It was moved to its present position on the north side of the south screen of the presbytery before 1818: Biddle, ‘Early Renaissance’, p. 298, n. 44.
 63. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 207. This must be why Edmund’s supposed bones were contained in one of Fox’s chests on top of the south screen (Figure 12.8). Although now in the easternmost bay, and partly visible at the right-hand edge of Fig 12.8, Edmund’s chest was wrongly replaced here in 1932 or more recently, instead of in the middle bay where it already stood by 1715: Biddle, ‘Early Renaissance’, p. 301, n. 82, fig. 19.15.
 64. *Waverley Annals (Annales monasterii de Waverleia)*, s.a. 1100, in *Annales Monastici*, Vol. 2, ed. Luard, pp. 127–411, at p. 208, where these words, an addition to the source used, may reflect special knowledge of Winchester deriving from the founder of Waverley Abbey, William Giffard, appointed bishop of Winchester immediately after William II’s burial. For William’s death in the New Forest and burial at Winchester, see Barlow, *William Rufus*, pp. 420–29 (*pace* Barlow, *not* in Old Minster!).
 65. William Rufus was a great benefactor of the cathedral, giving stone and timber and making other grants towards its construction (Biddle (ed.), *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 308, 472, and 478). This did not prevent the early growth of a legend that his burial *infra ambitum turris*, ‘beneath the tower’, led to its collapse in 1107: WM, *GRA*, 333.6, pp. 574–75, and Vol. 2, p. 287; cf. e.g., Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, pp. 270–71. The earlier sources do not specify the place of burial (ASC E, s.a. 1100; Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum, The History of the English People*, ed. D. Greenway (Oxford, 1996), pp. 448–49; Richard of Devizes, *Winchester Annals*, s.a. 1100, ed. Luard, p. 208). *Infra ambitum turris* may mean no more than *circa turrem*, ‘in the [general] area of the tower’ and be compatible with the *in choro ... ante majus altare* of the *Waverley Annals* (see last note): for this use of *ambitus*, see Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, liv.

- For the problems surrounding the identification of William's burial, see J. Crook, 'The "Rufus Tomb" in Winchester Cathedral', *Antiquaries Journal* 79 (1999), pp. 187–212.
66. There is a central well on the axis in the Norman east end, just as there was in Old Minster, a detail which emphasises the liturgical similarity of the two buildings: see above, p. 215.
 67. M. Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals and Residence: Winchester, Westminster and Gloucester in the Tenth to Twelfth Centuries', *ANS* 8 (1985), pp. 51–72, *passim*.
 68. Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals', pp. 53–54 and 67.
 69. Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 180.
 70. Crook, 'St. Swithun of Winchester', pp. 59–60, figures 6.2 and 6.3; but see now John Crook's contribution to *Anglo-Saxon Minsters*, as above, n. 40.
 71. Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', pp. 181–82. Although the two Edwards were buried elsewhere (see pp. 212–13), both were provided with statues and inscriptions on the fourteenth-century screen, see above, pp. 229–30. Edward the Confessor may also have been recorded on one of the sixteenth-century mortuary chests, see above, p. 231, and below, n. 83.
 72. See above, pp. 224–26.
 73. Alfred and Edward the Elder in New Minster (see Table 12.2 and above, p. 213); Æthelstan at Malmesbury; Edgar at Glastonbury; Æthelred in St. Paul's, London; and Edward the Confessor at Westminster (Table 12.2). This point was first made by Milner, *History of Winchester*, Vol. 2, p. 71, who noted that 'the real cause of these illustrious personages being honoured with statues in our church was, that they were its chief benefactors'.
 74. Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', p. 186, quoting Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 110 (c. 1460), pp. 318, 320, and 339, which gives the position of some of the lead containers. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, writing at about the same date, also gives the names of several kings and (by implication) a queen contained in the lead sarcophagi (pp. 194–95), but unlike CCCC, MS 110, he does not say where they were. See above, p. 218, and n. 35.
 75. Vaughan, *Monuments and Memorials*, pp. 14, 27; J. Hardacre, *Winchester Cathedral Triforium Gallery. Sculpture, Woodwork and Metalwork from Eleven Centuries* (Winchester, n.d. [1989]), pp. 46–48; Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', pp. 186–87.
 76. See above, pp. 222–23 and p. 241.
 77. See above, p. 236.
 78. Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', pp. 263 and 298, n. 41.
 79. Some elements of Fox's screens may pre-date 1525, especially the plinths containing the six earlier tombs and the blank walls at the west end of each screen, the one on the south where the bishop's throne stands (see above, p. 222 and Figure 12.15) and the one on the north on which the verses about Emma may have been painted (see above, pp. 237–38).
 80. Biddle, 'Early Renaissance', pp. 275–78. For the number of chests, see above, pp. 231–32.
 81. For the texts, see Vaughan, *Monuments and Memorials*, pp. 19–20.
 82. First identified and discussed in J. Crook, 'The Mortuary Chests and the Bones of Archbishop Stigand', *Winchester Cathedral Record* 73 (2004), pp. 20–31, at pp. 24–25.
 83. L. G. Wickham Legg (ed.), *A Relation of a Short Survey of the Western Counties Made by a Lieutenant of the Military Company in Norwich in 1635*, Royal Historical Society, Camden Miscellany 16 (London, 1936), pp. 46–47. Queen Emma's 'Sonnet' should probably be identified as Edward the Confessor, her son by her marriage to Æthelred II, since the same source puts Harthacnut in the same chest with Cnut (see above, p. 229). Winchester may have believed it had relics of Edward the Confessor, who was buried at Westminster, but the appearance of 'Æthelredus Rex' and 'Sanctus Edwardus Rex, filius eius' (*i.e.* Æthelred and his son Edward the Confessor) in a niche of the fourteenth-century screen does nothing to support this, since the screen was a commemoration of benefactors, six of whom (including Æthelred and Edward), were not buried in Old Minster (see above, n. 73). Francis Godwin's *Catalogue*, published in 1601, preserves a detailed record of the chests on the north screen containing the remains of the Anglo-Saxon bishops: *A Catalogue of the Bishops of England* (London, 1601), pp. 160, 162, 168–69, and 172.
 84. Bruno Ryves, *Mercurius Rusticus*, 20th Week, 24 February 1643 (Oxford, 1643 [copy in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hope adds. 1133]), p. 165. This account, written and published within ten weeks of the sack of the cathedral, is remarkable, where it can be checked, for its accuracy and wealth of detail.
 85. Vaughan, *Monuments and Memorials*, p. 18, accepts the evidence of a note of c. 1684 in the first Cathedral Register that there were originally eight chests; but the contemporary evidence of the account of 1635 that there were ten is decisive (Wickham Legg (ed.), *Survey of the Western Counties*, pp. 46–47) and confirms the evidence of a late sixteenth-century text, 'Q', published by Crook, 'Bones of Stigand', pp. 24–25.
 86. The chests were seen without inscriptions by the Dutch artist William Schellinks on 8 September 1662: *The Journal of William Schellinks' Travels in England*

- 1661–1663, ed. and trans. M. Exwood and H. L. Lehmann, Camden 5th Ser. 1 (London, 1993), p. 137, cf. n. 168. We once thought that the short inscriptions recorded in S. Gale, *The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Winchester* (London, 1715), pp. 26–29 (of the second set of pagination), and described by him as ‘formerly’ on the chests, dated from an initial painting in or shortly after Schellinks’ visit in 1662. These inscriptions had first been recorded by Henry Hyde in or before February 1683/4, but Gale noted that they had ‘lately’ or ‘now’ been replaced by the inscriptions he recorded (for further changes to the inscriptions, see below, n. 88). The short inscriptions referring to bishops Wine and Stigand are, however, identical to those recorded by Francis Godwin in 1601 (*Catalogue*, pp. 160 and 169), and were therefore the inscriptions on Fox’s original chests. Henry Hyde was presumably relying for these earlier inscriptions on Godwin or some other pre-1642 source, and derived the text of the ‘former’ inscription relating to Cnut and William Rufus from some similar source.
87. Vaughan, *Monuments and Memorials*, pp. 18–20.
88. The texts of the inscriptions given here as they appear today are taken from the north face (i.e. the aisle face) of the north chest (Figure 12.18) and from the north face (i.e. the presbytery face) of the south chest (Figure 12.16). Unlike the two corresponding south-facing inscriptions, these two north-facing inscriptions are painted over a white base, in an earlier script, and in better (but still incorrect) Latin. The two south-facing inscriptions seem to have been repainted over panels from which the white base and earlier inscriptions have been cleaned. The earlier pair probably date from the late seventeenth century; the later pair from the nineteenth. In his *History of Winchester*, first published in 1798, Milner quotes (Vol. 2, p. 48) the text of the inscription on the south face of the north chest (i.e. a face now repainted) without the errors it now displays. In 1818, in his *Historical Account of Winchester*, Charles Ball noted that the inscriptions on these two chests were ‘now nearly illegible’ (C. Ball, *An Historical Account of Winchester with Descriptive Walks* (Winchester, 1818), p. 111). Thus, the two south-facing inscriptions were probably repainted after 1818 and this probably took place in 1824: Crook, ‘Bones of Stigand’, p. 28 and n.38.
89. See above, pp. 230–31.
90. See above, p. 231. The appearance of Harthacnut on one of Fox’s chests provides a special problem, for he is the only one of the pre-Norman kings who also has a separate tomb (Figures 12.21–22), see above, pp. 238–40.
91. Gale, *Antiquities*, pp. 26–27.
92. Edmund Cartwright Jr. (1773–1833), eldest child of the Rev. Edmund Cartwright (1743–1823), the inventor of the power loom, was later the rector of Earnley, near Chichester, and author of ‘The Topographical History of the Rape of Bramber, in Western Sussex’ (M. Strickland, *Memoir of the Life, Writings, and Mechanical Inventions, of Edmund Cartwright* (1843; reprinted, New York, 1971), p. 293 n.; see also D. Hunt, ‘Cartwright, Edmund (1743–1823)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4813>>.
93. R. Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain ... from the Norman Conquest to the Seventeenth Century* (London, 2 vols, 1786–96), Vol. 2, p. cccxxxvii.
94. Milner, *History ... of Winchester*, Vol. 2 (1798), pp. 49–50, unnumbered note. See J. F. Champ, ‘Milner, John (1752–1826)’, and W. A. J. Archbold (rev. J. A. Marchand), ‘Howard, Henry (1757–1842)’, both in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18791>>, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13911>>.
95. Henry Howard was wrong in saying that Stigand was named on this chest together with Wine. Stigand (bishop, 1047–70; deposed 1070; d.1072) was the last of the Anglo-Saxon bishops. He was buried in Winchester, presumably in Old Minster. If so, his body was probably translated into the new cathedral by his successor Walkelin in 1093–4. It is not again recorded until 1454 when his remains were in a lead coffer on the south side of the high altar, near the bishop’s throne, presumably on one of the walls flanking the presbytery. He was named on one of Bishop Fox’s chests destroyed in 1642 (Godwin, *Catalogue*, p. 169), but his name was not included among those listed on the replacement chests of 1661 when they were inscribed in 1684–92 (Crook, ‘Bones of Stigand’, *passim*). The belief that Stigand was named on one of the replacement chests is based on a misreading of Gale’s account of 1715 (*Antiquities*, p. 28), where Hyde as printed by Gale was quoting the inscription which *had* been there before 1642, probably relying on the list given in Francis Godwin’s *Catalogue*, first published in 1601 (see further above, n. 86).
96. B. B. Woodward, *A History and Description of Winchester* (Winchester, n.d. [c.1860]), p. 71.
97. Vaughan, *Monuments and Memorials*, p. 27. For the two earlier chests, see above, p. 229. Baigent did not find earlier chests inside the other chests, although in 1635 the bones in Fox’s chests were said to be ‘wrapt, and shrind’ in Lead’ (Wickham Legg, ed., *Survey of*

- the *Western Counties*, p. 46). It is not obvious how this could have been known in 1635 without opening the chests (which might easily have been done by lifting the light-weight lids), and might have been based on hearsay, but is more likely to be a simple misconception. Bruno Ryves, in his well informed account of the destruction caused by the Parliamentary soldiers in 1642, wrote how Bishop Fox had collected the bones and put them 'into severall Chests of Lead, with inscriptions on each chest, whose bones were lodged in them' and placed them 'on the top of a wall, of exquisite workmanship, built by him to enclose the *Presbytery*' (Ryves, *Mercurius Rusticus*, p. 164). These were certainly Fox's wooden chests. If some of the twelfth-century lead boxes did still survive inside Fox's chests in 1635, which seems unlikely, they were presumably stolen in the sack of 1642.
98. Vaughan, *Monuments and Memorials*, pp. 27–28.
 99. Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', p. 191.
 100. When this note was first written in 1999 for *Danske kongegrave* (see above, n. 1), the situation seemed much less promising than it does in 2014. Then, recent work, arising from incomprehensible and impossible aDNA (ancient DNA) results on a series of Viking Age burials from the Viking winter camp of 873–4 at Repton, Derbyshire (M. T. P. Gilbert *et al.* [incl. M. Biddle and B. Kjolbye-Biddle], 'Biochemical and Physical Correlates of DNA Contamination in Archaeological Human Bones and Teeth Excavated at Matera, Italy', *Journal of Archaeological Science* 32 (2005), pp. 785–93, at p. 792), indicated that aDNA could be so contaminated as to constitute a serious threat to the validity of aDNA studies, especially on human specimens. Subsequent improvements in sampling and laboratory techniques have revolutionized the picture to the extent that demonstrably reliable results are now regularly obtained, although interpretation remains fraught with difficulty.
 101. However, note that Pauline Stafford comments that there is no specific evidence she was repudiated: 'Ælfgyfu (fl. 1006–1036)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/180>>.
 102. ASC C, D, s.a. 1035; E, s.a. 1036 (*recte* 1035); *Encomium Emmae*, ed. Campbell, pp. 38–39; JW, s.a. 1035, pp. 520–21. For the evidence behind the remainder of this entry, where not specifically quoted, see above, pp. 219–29.
 103. A lead chest probably made for the translation of 1093 survives below the tomb slab of Earl Beorn and of Richard son of the Conqueror: see above, pp. 224–26.
 104. See above, p. 229.
 105. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 110, p. 339. The reference here to 'Old Minster' cannot be taken at face value: the medieval monks of Winchester Cathedral believed that the Norman church *was* Old Minster. This belief survived down into the nineteenth century and was only finally dispelled by Robert Willis in 1845 (R. Willis, 'The Architectural History of Winchester Cathedral', in *Proceedings at the Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland at Winchester, September, MDCCCXLV* (London, 1846), pp. 33–37). No surviving eleventh-century source says that Cnut was buried 'before the high altar' of Old Minster, and this statement must be therefore be disregarded. The evidence of the author of MS 110 for the situation in his own time can by contrast be accepted.
 106. Gale, *Antiquities*, pp. 26–27. This inscription on the third chest on the south side was probably derived by Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, in his 'Account of the Tombs and Monuments in the Cathedral Church of Winchester' finished on 17 February 1683/4, from some earlier source, pre-dating the destruction of 1642: see above, p. 231. This inscription agrees with the late sixteenth-century source (named 'Q' by Crook) in pairing Cnut and Rufus: Crook, 'Bones of Stigand', p. 24.
 107. Wickham Legg (ed.), *Survey of the Western Counties*, p. 47.
 108. For the problem of Harthacnut's bones, see above, pp. 238–40. This supposed pairing of Cnut and Harthacnut may be no more than a reflection of their pairing on the fourteenth-century screen commemorating benefactors, see above, Figures 12.13–14. The late sixteenth-century source 'Q' (Crook, 'Bones of Stigand', p. 24) has Cnut and Rufus together in one chest and does not mention Harthacnut in this context.
 109. The suggestion that Cnut's heart was buried in a glass bowl found in front of the high altar of Shaftesbury Abbey is baseless; the identification of a burial found in Winchester cathedral in June 1776 as that of Cnut is equally without foundation: cf. Hardacre, *Triforium Gallery*, p. 59 (No. 98); Crook, 'Cnut's Bones', pp. 169–70 and 176, n.24.
 110. ASC C, s.a. 1051 (*recte* 1052); cf. ASC D, E, s.a. 1052; JW, s.a. 1052, pp. 566–67. For the evidence behind the remainder of this entry, where not specifically quoted, see above, pp. 238–40.
 111. Crook, 'Bones of Stigand', p. 24.
 112. A text of the poem recorded c.1600 appears in British Library, Harleian MS. 6072, fol. 29r, which includes the record of the inscriptions on the mortuary chests

- (fols 29r–v.) named ‘Q’ in Crook, ‘Bones of Stigand’. The poem was printed by Gale, *Antiquities*, p. 31, in the section of his book taken from the ‘Account’ written by Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and finished on 17 February 1683/4 (see Gale’s Preface). Gale may have added the poem to this part of the text: for this problem, see further above, p. 231 and n. 106.
113. Rudborne, *Historia Maior*, p. 239.
 114. Wickham Legg (ed.), *Survey of the Western Counties*, p. 47.
 115. Ryves, *Mercurius Rusticus*, p. 165; see above, p. 232, n. 84.
 116. See above, p. 229.
 117. See above, p. 229 and n. 120.
 118. See above, p. 232.
 119. JW, s.a. 1042, pp. 534–35; cf. *ASC*, C, D, s.a. 1042. For the evidence behind the remainder of this entry, where not specifically quoted, see above, pp. 219–29.
 120. JW, s.a. 1042, pp. 534–35: *iuxta patrem suum regem Canutum*; *ASC* E, s.a. 1041 (*recte* 1042): ‘with [*mid*] King Cnut his father’.
 121. But not his supposed half-brother, Harold Harefoot, king of England 1035–40. Harold claimed to be Cnut’s son by his concubine Ælfgifu of Northampton. He was buried at Westminster, but dug up by order of Harthacnut, and thrown first into a marsh and then into the Thames, before being rescued and taken ‘in haste to the Danes, and ... honourably buried by them in the cemetery they had in London’: JW, s.a. 1035, pp. 520–21 and s.a. 1040, pp. 528–31.
 122. Crook, ‘Bones of Stigand’, p. 24.
 123. See above, pp. 231–32.
 124. See above, p. 236.
 125. Quoted above, p. 231 and see n. 84. On the previous page Ryves lists in approximately chronological order the kings whose bones were believed to be in the chests (*Mercurius Rusticus*, p. 164). This gives no clue to their location, unlike the specific description of 1635, quoted above, p. 231.
 126. For the first labelling of the chests, at some date after September 1662, see above, pp. 230–32.
 127. JW, s.a. 1040, pp. 528–29; cf. *ASC* C, D, s.a. 1040, E, s.a. 1039 (*recte* 1040).
 128. *ASC* C, D, s.a. 1040: *and he ne gefremede ec naht cynelices þa hwile ðe he rixode* (text from C); cf. JW, s.a. 1040, pp. 528–31: *sed sui imperii tempore nil egit dignum potestati regie*.
 129. Biddle, ‘Early Renaissance’, pp. 266–67: the three tombs are that of Beorn and Richard (see above, p. 224), and the heart-tombs of bishops Nicholas of Ely and Aymer de Valence, the latter in the north screen next to Hardeknud.
 130. See above, p. 219.
 131. Wickham Legg (ed.), *Survey of the Western Counties*, p. 47; see above, pp. 231–32.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Some Reflections on Danes in Wessex Today

Lillian Céspedes González

Although the image of the Vikings has changed through the ages, the modern perception and interpretation of them in popular culture often remains stereotypical. Barbarous raiders with horned helmets, ravaging the coasts of Europe in the search for riches remain the dominant images. The myth of the bloodthirsty Norsemen has a long legacy. Simon Coupland noted its likely origins in the ninth-century chronicle records of the sack of Nantes, and has commented on its developments since then, in Continental European – specifically West Frankish and French – terms.¹ Such a misconception is not unrelated to views of Vikings in the British Isles, particularly in the south of England, where the legacy of the kingdom of Wessex prevails. This dichotomy between the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian (Norse/Danish) inheritance is another product of collective memory in national terms, and the struggle for a national identity is deeply imbued in a region that has such a rich and varied past.

This chapter is intended to provide a brief examination of how perceptions of the Vikings have been shaped by social and collective memory, and how it has had an impact in the geographical area of Wessex. While a short chapter such as this can only scratch the surface of the ways in which the legacy of Danes in Wessex is perceived in the region today, the chapter includes a summary and consideration of data provided in a short survey on the topic undertaken in the autumn of 2013,

as well a short interview with Tim Hall, a local artist from Hampshire whose recent work includes representations of the Vikings. In this manner, the chapter can at least show that the views and representations of Danes in Wessex continue to be shaped by individuals as well as by a collective consciousness.

The Vikings: Made in Great Britain?

Throughout the United Kingdom there is a clear fascination with the medieval past. This is a past in which Danes play a significant part. The Danes, or Vikings, are part of the national identity either as enemies of the Anglo-Saxons, ancestors who occupied the Danelaw, or who, in the eleventh century, in their manifestations as Normans, took over the English crown and managed to expand their influence into the Celtic areas of the British Isles. In one way or another, Britain was full of Northmen and this became a symbol. This established a connection between the Vikings and the British cultural identity. Regarding this subject, Geoffrey Cubitt explains how, in order to be a member of a national community, one needs to know the past of the nation, to develop a sense of entity.² In Britain, this fully manifested itself during the eighteenth and, mainly, nineteenth centuries. The dawn of the Victorian age brought with it the need to address identity issues. As a consequence, the intellectuals and scholars of the

period started to investigate their distant past, and rescued many stories from medieval times, which led to the production of literary works on the Vikings.³ Thus a new Viking Age flourished. However, it was not only translations of the sagas that began to populate the Victorian bookshelves, but modern takes on old legends. Particularly popular was the work of Bishop Esais Tegnér and his characterisation of the Old Norse hero, Frithiof, in a 'Swedish poetic paraphrase of the Icelandic saga', which was translated for an English-speaking audience.⁴ Tegnér's work and other English renderings of saga literature depicted the Norse in a romantic fashion, with their furs, horned helmets and acts of great valour and strength, which only contributed to the further mystification of the Danes. The popularisation of these images and ideas had an important impact on how these people were understood and remembered from then on. According to Cubitt, the effect that transmission has on cultural products and memory is crucial. This is because different media devices interact with our retention of images and thoughts, playing a part in the formulation of knowledge and, in this, case our interpretation of the past.⁵ Thus, this British Norse mythology passed down to the later generations in the shape of stereotype.

The twentieth century saw yet another revival of Norse fascination due to the emergence of fantasy literature. And, once again, it was a Briton whose impact was crucial. J. R. R. Tolkien, a member of the Viking Club in Leeds, manufactured his own world in which he developed an idealised and alternative mythology of Northern Europe's remote past,⁶ including that of the British Isles. Once again, the Norse had shape-shifted. Their relation to the people of Tolkien's Middle-earth still has a great impact in popular culture and our collective memory. Scholars have noted the connection between the Old Norse and Tolkien's creations, referencing the civilisation of Númenor. The men of Númenor were the inhabitants of a great, lonely island in the Sundering Seas of Middle-earth. They were seasoned seafarers, well known for their

ship-building technology. A group of these people settled on a continent comprising the kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor.⁷ The traditions of Gondor form a possible link between the Vikings and Tolkien: both the crown and traditional helmet of Gondor have wings which, according to Dimitra Fimi, symbolises Viking influence.⁸ Tolkien's medieval imagery is still referenced today and includes an idealised or distorted Viking stereotype. This is all the more apparent now that the *Lord of the Rings* has been adapted to film and is now a major franchise, the sales of the books having increased due to the popularity of the movies. Between 2000 (when the first of the *Lord of the Rings* films entered the public imagination prior to its release in 2001) and 2004, sales of the *Hobbit* and volumes of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy totalled 25 million copies.⁹ Thus, it is not surprising that popular interpretations of the Viking world so often encompass elements of the fantastic.

The other part of the story of the Vikings in the twentieth century is somewhat less positive. Despite the effort of intellectuals like Tolkien, the reputation of the Vikings was severely damaged in the Second World War, when the Nazi regime made extended use of their Norse heritage for its Aryan appeal. A poster exhorting the population of occupied Denmark to fight 'For Denmark... Against Bolshevism' (*For Danmark! Mod Bolchevismen!*), using the image of a Waffen-SS soldier juxtaposed against the ghostly image of a Viking warrior (his helmet notably free of horns) is just one of the more infamous manifestations of this.¹⁰ As a consequence, the Norsemen became the villains once more, not only in their Norse homelands, but also in Britain.¹¹ Furthermore, considering that Great Britain was on the victorious side in the Second World War, it seemed inappropriate to associate the national identity with anything vaguely Germanic. Britain needed new ancestors to relate to and be proud of, something that could supplant the might of the Vikings and Normans.¹² While the Arthurian myth has been in a privileged position in regard to

the British national identity since the end of the nineteenth century and, arguably more so, after the First World War,¹³ the relative significance of Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons in the British 'Island Story' seems to have been an issue with its own momentum in the twentieth century, with the Scandinavian identity losing. According to Søren Sindbæk, 'in its place appeared a convenient association with the "maritime" ... Anglo-Saxon culture of Britain and America'.¹⁴

This did not mean the end of the Danes and their legacy, but rather a reinforcement of old traditions. Perhaps the recurring identity as villains turned in the favour of the Northmen; this is especially apparent in the light of a point made by Andrew Wawn about the celebration of the Norse past in opposition to the Anglo-Saxon legacy. He states that 'the iconography that the Victorians developed for them remains instantly recognisable and widely deployed, whereas popular Anglo-Saxonism has never found the right logo'.¹⁵

The Legacy of the Danes in Wessex

As Ryan Lavelle and Simon Roffey underline in the introduction to this volume, there were Danes in Wessex. It is true that perhaps their presence was not as prominent as further north, like in York where the Scandinavian legacy has left a deeper mark. This is well represented by the Jorvik Centre and the Viking festivals which are a core part of that region's cultural heritage and industry.¹⁶ Understandably, nothing comparable exists in the south of the country. However, there are various re-enactment societies that focus on this period and are based around the south of England. For example, one group, 'Hildsvin', is an 'active member of "The Vikings!" Re-enactment society'. They come from the area of Somerset and Devon, and meet regularly at Yeoford (Devon) on Sunday mornings.¹⁷ Although most re-enactment groups, by their nature, require members to portray different groups (e.g. 'Vikings' and 'Saxons'), it is perhaps indicative of the increasing profile of

the Vikings that it is this identity which has the higher profile on the group's website (although *Hildsvin* – 'battle-boar' – shares both a Germanic and Norse root in its name, so credibly shows both these identities). In Southampton, a BBC Hampshire report publicised the activity of a Viking re-enactment group set up in Hampshire called 'Sveinhavn'. The report states that the society was created when Dave Hubble, a founding member, moved to the area of Southampton: 'He and a friend had been enthusiasts in Leicester and discovered that, despite Southampton's Viking history, the city lacked a re-enactment group'.¹⁸ The idea of a 'Viking heritage' for Southampton, in this case, is based on the at least plausible notion that Southampton was used as a base by Swein Forkbeard.¹⁹ The reporter's attribution of the 'Sveinhavn' group's founder member's motives may reflect the idea that a sense of Viking heritage is more prominent in the Midlands and north of England, although it has clearly been flourishing in the area of Wessex in the last decade. One might say that these re-enactment groups follow in a grand tradition which includes the tableaux relating to the life of Alfred the Great that were performed as part of the 1901 Millenary celebrations of the king's death. Although Victorian and Edwardian *tableaux vivants* were static, requiring performers to remain still for their audience and were, at first glance, a world away from the action of a re-enactment battle, the mass participation necessary to enact an effective tableau and the popularity of the genre show the significance of the dramatic in the popular consumption of history – for both performers and viewers – just as a weekend re-enactment might. A number of tableaux were seen at the mayoral reception.²⁰ Amongst them was the representation of the Battle of Edington (878), where both 'Saxons' and 'Danes' were present (see Figure 13.1).²¹ The vestiges of the Victorian furore with the Germanic past of the nation are depicted by these acts of remembrance.

Yet there is evidence that Norsemen populated these lands and, despite the 'Saxon' domination of



Figure 13.1. Tableau from the Alfredian millenary celebrations of 1901, depicting Anglo-Saxons and Vikings at the Battle of Edington (878). (Reproduced from A. Bowker, *The King Alfred Millenary* (London, 1902), facing p. 178)

the early medieval memory of Wessex, such evidence is part of the collective memory (even if, at times, it remains stubbornly in the subconscious). There are place-names that contribute to the production of these *lieux de memoires*. Several examples are found in Hampshire, such as the villages of Froyle and Freefolk. John Grigsby suggests that these toponyms may indicate a relationship between these locations and the Norse goddess Frigg: Froyle, in its original form, meaning Frigg's Hill; Freefolk being Frigg's people.²² It is difficult to establish whether this connection relates to worship or cultural affiliation; Grigsby supports the idea that these names were a significant identifier of the people who inhabited the area, although as Frigg was common to both Norse and Anglo-Saxon paganism, a pre-Viking background may be as likely as a Viking Age one.

Rather more solid evidence for Norse names are provided by Fellows-Jensen, who presents the case of Thruxton (Hampshire), 'which contains the contracted name-form Thurkil'.²³

Admittedly, such instances are rare in their medieval context, especially when seen on a map where the Scandinavian name elements north and east of the dividing line of the Alfred-Guthrum treaty provide an almost stippled effect.²⁴ Traditions of the memorialisation of Danish associations may have more to do with interpretations of the post-Viking past in Wessex than the Vikings' actions themselves. For example, the site of Danebury, one of Hampshire's Iron Age hillforts, and places with a similar background seem to have been related or thought to have a connection with the distant medieval past. It can be seen in antiquarian work,

when the origin and meaning of these locations was still open to discussion, and their mystification favoured connections with the Vikings, Anglo-Saxons – and the ‘Dark Ages’ in general – or even to the Arthurian legends.²⁵ For example, one eighteenth-century ode, written by an anonymous ‘young lady’, *Danebury: or the power of friendship, a tale*, refers to Danebury Hill as the ‘ancient camp’ of the Danes, providing an imagined encounter between them and the Anglo-Saxons, linking the place-name with ‘the ensanguin’d field’.²⁶ For the author of *Danebury*, the hillfort and the memory of a distant provided a convenient backdrop for more contemporary concerns but other authors *specifically* considered the place of the Danes in the southern English landscape. A study of the topography of Somerset, produced some time in the nineteenth century, provides another example of this connection between the Danes and the landscape, in the context of myth and popular culture and belief. A nineteenth-century antiquarian, G. A. Cooke, gives an account of an unusual landscape formation in Somerset that he calls Robin Hood’s Butts, ‘an immense quantity of flints lying in vast heaps, upwards of sixty yards in circumference’, which were ‘supposed to be placed over the graves of men who fell in the wars between the Danes and the Saxons’.²⁷

In the modern urban landscape, there are more indications of Wawn’s sense of the Norse public relations victory. Notwithstanding the BBC’s curious decision to identify the Bristol location of its primetime Saturday night series, *Casualty*, as Holby city (set in Wyvern County, no less!), which may or may not have been a conscious subversion of the dominance of *-by* names in the English landscape *beyond* Bristol, modern place-names associated with Danes are not infrequent. In Romsey (Hants), there is a road called The Vikings. Similarly, in Christchurch (in Dorset since 1974), there is a Viking Way, and other examples flourish elsewhere, like Viking Close in Watchet (Som.). Furthermore, Viking is a word that appears in association with sports clubs in

the south of England. Its use in Rugby is popular, with the Vikings club in Somerset, as well as the Gosport and Fareham Vikings. There is even a Basingstoke Vikings hockey club and a football club in Weymouth called AFC Chesil Vikings. Once again, however, the Norse influence can be seen as more prominent in northern England. Just in the area of York there are several clubs and sport associations related to the Vikings.²⁸ Perhaps this is connection that symbolises the survival of the myth of the Northmen as warrior-like people, of gigantic dimensions and tough physical appearance.²⁹ This all feeds back into the idea of collective memory and how the stereotypical idealisation of this people justifies the ‘importance of historical reception for our understanding of a cultural artifact’, as outlined by Alan Confino.³⁰ Nevertheless, the Saxons appear in the names of sport clubs too, although the geographical distribution may be more widely spread. Some of the examples found are: The Saxons – Saxmundham Running and Fitness club, in Suffolk; Stockport Football Club, nicknamed ‘The Saxons’, in Cheshire; and the more local Rugby Club, the Paignton Saxons, in Devon.

However, if we are to engage with the creation of a Danish cultural identity for early medieval Wessex, it is important to take into account the popular engagement with the material past. In this volume, Angela Boyle demonstrates that there are also archaeological remains of these ‘Danes’ in Wessex. The remains discovered in 2009 at Ridgeway Hill have been since the topic of many investigations, but they have also become a cultural artefact that causes controversy. Several local newspapers covered the story. Although a general feeling of ‘Otherness’ is directed towards the Norse burials, there are some sources that express more vividly the clash of cultural identity. Writing for the *Daily Mail*, Tamara Cohen portrays the Danes as evil warriors, while the ‘Anglo-Saxon villagers’ are seen as brave, cunning and ultimately victorious.³¹ Expressions such as ‘humiliated’ and ‘tossed into a ditch’ leave the cold sensation that these Northmen were not, and still are not, welcome in the South, or indeed



Figure 13.2. A Southamton-based depiction of Viking culture: *Skragbeard and the Vikings* (Void Studios), by Tim Hall. (© Tim Hall; reproduced with permission)

England. It is worth mentioning that newspaper reports when the burials were first found presented similar issues regarding the cultural identity of the region. Originally, prior to the radiocarbon-dating detailed by Boyle, the archaeological site was thought to be an Iron Age mass burial, whose victims were the local population of Dorset, slayed by the Romans in their 'brutal conquest'.³² Perhaps this can be seen as a general reaction coming from the collective memory and cultural identity of the south of England. In either instance the outside, invader group is vilified in favour of what may be understood as the 'locals'.

On the other hand, a more recent Southampton newspaper, the *Southern Daily Echo*, published an article that shows a different approach, more attune to the original Victorian attitudes towards the heroic Old Norse. The report explains how Tim Hall, an artist from Fareham (Hants), based in Southampton, finally published the first issue of his comic series: *Skragbeard and The Vikings*.³³ Admittedly the comic itself (Figure 13.2) is not related to the Danes in the area of Wessex, but Hall's appreciation for this culture is evident, such as in the echoes of Scandinavian historical characters in

the protagonists' names. The *Echo's* reportage on the subject of Vikings offers no opinion on the place of Vikings in the South but further discussion with Hall, specifically for this chapter, provides some information about his ideas on the Vikings and how he relates to the subject. In response to a question about his motivations, he states: 'I wanted to create a Viking comic book specifically because I'm interested in Norse mythology'. About the perceptions of the Vikings in the south of England, he comments:

I've always understood them to be part of our ancestry ever since my dad explained that where he came from (Nottingham) originally fell under Dane Law. I would guess that many people are aware of a shared Viking and Saxon gene pool in this country but whether there's any difference between 'North' and 'South' perceptions, I'm not too sure. Maybe those who live further north are more aware of Viking ancestry due to town names being of Danish origin.³⁴

Such affiliation with Scandinavian elements of cultural heritage for a modern person living in the south of England provides an interesting link with the Southampton re-enactor mentioned above, another Viking enthusiast whose interests



Figure 13.3. *Thorkell the Tall's force heading across Wessex, from Vinland Saga vol. 3, by Makoto Yukimura. (Vinland Saga © Makoto Yukimura / Kodansha, Ltd., All rights reserved)*

stemmed from the Vikings' *otherness* in the South. It is perhaps telling that Hall does *not* – as yet – make use of the Danish legacy in Wessex in his depiction of the Viking past. As with many comic book depictions of the Viking world, fantasy plays a significant role, and the fantastical is often far more important than the historical content.³⁵ There are notable exceptions to this trend – the long-running Japanese Manga comic series, the *Vinland Sagas*, tend to be based on historical events and characters. Thorkell the Tall, a Viking in Wessex whose posthumous cultural dimensions have been considered by Ann Williams, is perhaps

the most significant here.³⁶ One of the earlier volumes in the series features a historical Wessex whose systems of fortification are interpreted as powerless in the face of strategic avoidance, until the invading Vikings reach London, where they are stopped by defenders aided by a determined Thorkell (Figure 13.3).³⁷ However, for the author and artist, Makoto Yukimura, Wessex simply provides a suitable linking territory, a land turned into waste, between two points on a storyline: the arrival of an invasion force on the River Humber in 1013 and the dramatic siege of London.

This information acquires a new dimension when considered alongside the results drawn from other individuals questioned for this chapter. An anonymous questionnaire was distributed through contacts at the University of Winchester, as well as being publicly available online (See Appendix). Although the limits inherent in the means of distribution of the questionnaire must be acknowledged (it was filled by forty-three participants, ages ranging from 18 years old to over 50), the results are worthy of comment. Most respondents (74 per cent) came from the south of England and, with the exception of 9 per cent of respondents, considered themselves familiar, at least to a certain degree, with the Danes or Vikings. With this in mind, it is striking to know that the majority of the subjects (64 per cent) did not know of any references to the Danes or their culture in the area of Wessex. One respondent seemed to be familiar with certain pub names such as the Spread Eagle, which was perhaps identified as a Viking name, perhaps due to its connection with the infamous 'Blood Eagle' execution (this is likely to be an erroneous association, however). There were also other place-names provided as examples, such as the case of a female respondent from Kent who knew of 'the Viking cycle route and various place-names associated with the Vikings'.

Furthermore, some interesting results come from the survey when it asked if they knew any other names that mean or relate to the Vikings as a culture (Figure 13.4). While 38 per cent of the

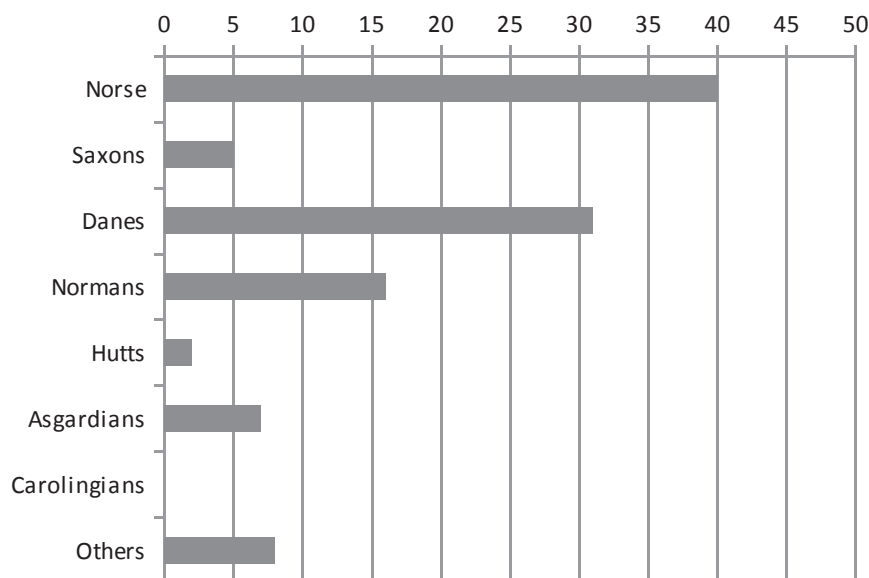


Figure 13.4. Words chosen for their associations with Vikings (from online survey, recorded by frequency of response).

individuals established the relationship between Vikings and Norse, the proportion who made the same correlation for Vikings and Danes is notably lower, at 28 per cent.³⁸ The questionnaire allowed respondents to offer multiple responses rather than a single 'correct' response, so it is interesting that 5 per cent of the subjects picked the word Saxon; other responses, such as the rather inventive 'Asgardians' and 'Hutts' (the latter in reference to a fictional alien race in *Star Wars*) indicate the range of ways in which Viking identity is evidently shaped to meet modern interests.

Another question asked the participants if they thought that the Viking heritage was supported as much as the Anglo-Saxon legacy within this region. To this, 79 per cent of the answers gave a negative reply. Finally, it is useful to consider the replies provided by the subjects to the penultimate question, in which they were asked to explain, with their own words, their personal views on the Norse. Here the results do somehow resemble the Victorian British ideas of the Northmen supported by Wawn, in the sense that they range from warriors and raiders,

to traders and seafarers.³⁹ The appendix, with the summary graph in Figure 13.5, provides an attempt to categorise some of the issues raised in answers. Both positive and negative perceptions of Vikings can be seen in the responses provided by those who took part in the survey.⁴⁰ Some of the answers were quite blunt, reflecting the most stereotypical image of the Vikings as 'smelly dirty giants of men with long hair and beards with bad teeth carrying short swords'; the words 'rough' and 'violent' also appear frequently, with twenty-eight respondents noting violence in some manner, though only three citing masculinity/gender specifically. On the other hand, the positive feedback seems to be more accepting of the Vikings as an actual culture worth of consideration, 'not as violent as previously thought', as well as earning the following appraisal: 'an intelligent race and they founded a lot of how we live today'. However, the majority of the replies do show a mixed opinion between the positive and negative approach considering the Danes, characterising them with such phrases as 'a combination of barbaric warriors and highly

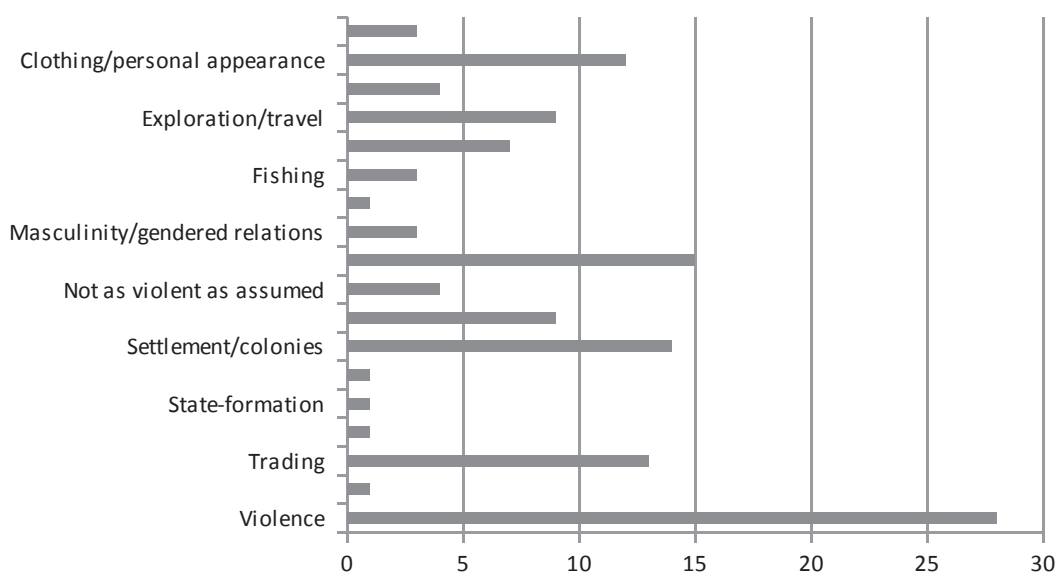


Figure 13.5. A summary of issues cited in survey respondents' views of Vikings (from online survey, recorded by frequency of response).

efficient traders and explorers'. Furthermore, approximately half of the responses indicated in some way that popular culture has had a negative impact on the Vikings reception, noting the civilised aspects of culture, or simply noting that the Vikings were just as violent as any of their contemporaries.

Although many of the survey participants related their responses to the early medieval world beyond the southern regions of England, responses to the survey show that the Northmen, in one form or other, have a place in the popular culture and memory of the south of England. It is worth noting that due to the limitations of this article, it was not possible for the research and data collection to be taken elsewhere. If the investigation had been pursued further north, in a location within the area of the medieval Danelaw, the results would be likely to have been different and the perception of the Vikings may have turned out to be more (although not wholly) positive and favourable. After all, this is information acquired by members of the public linked to a particular region of the country, and that acquisition of information, as part of their

cultural identity, may be ascribed to the legacy of their perceived ancestors as a performance of cultural citizenship.⁴¹

The questionnaire responses may indicate that although there are still many people who agree with the stereotypical image of the Danes in Wessex, there are others who disagree. One of the problems that collective memory has on how as a society we perceive cultural artefacts is that misconceptions tend to prevail. According to Coupland, 'somehow an idea enters popular consciousness and becomes virtually unassailable by dint of frequent repetition'.⁴² It is unlikely that the Danes will become the preferred symbol of the south of England, especially considering the legacy of Alfred the Great and the cultural impact this has on the populace. As Roland Barthes states, 'we constantly drift between the object and the demystification, powerless to render its wholeness'.⁴³ Nonetheless, there is hope for their acknowledgement and the understanding of them as an intrinsic part of the history of Wessex, worth knowing and decoding.⁴⁴

Appendix: Summary of the Results of a Survey on the Perceptions of Vikings

A link to the survey, created via Google Docs, was posted via internet forums and email distribution lists during October 2013. Forty-three responses were received, which came from a range of survey participants for whom, as can be seen, an interest in the Vikings was not a prerequisite for responding to the survey.

1. *Do you come from the south of England?*
 Yes = 32
 No = 3
 No (but lived in the South some time) = 8
2. *What is your age?*
 18–25 = 14
 25–30 = 4
 30–40 = 8
 40–50 = 8
 50+ = 9
3. *What is your gender?*
 Female = 23
 Male = 20
4. *How familiar are you with the Vikings' culture?*
 Unfamiliar = 4
 Some familiarity = 23
 Degree-level study = 16
5. *Identify other words used to refer to the Vikings as a culture (Select one or more responses from Norse/ Saxons/ Danes/ Normans/ Hutts / Asgardians/ Carolingians/ Other [specify])*
 Don't know = 1
 Normans = 16
 Norse = 40
 Danes = 31
 Asgardians = 7
 Hutts = 2
 Norwegians = 1
 Varangians = 2
 Swedes = 2
 Scandinavians = 1
 Saxons = 5
 Northern raiders = 1
 Rus = 1
6. *Are you aware of any references to the Vikings and their culture in the south of England? (place-names, pub names, clubs, items of popular culture, etc.)*
 Yes = 11
 (examples given: Place-names (3); Warhammer games; Re-enactment; Popular interpretations of local history (3), Pub/beer (1))
 No = 32
7. *What is your personal perception of the Vikings? (i.e. How do you picture them? Who you think they were and how did they live?)*
 Issues cited in answers:
 Buildings = 3
 Clothing/personal appearance = 12
 Craft = 4
 Exploration/travel = 9
 Farming = 7
 Fishing = 3
 Historical traditions = 1
 Masculinity/gendered relations = 3
 Navigation/ships = 15
 Not as violent as assumed = 4
 Religion/beliefs = 9
 Settlement/colonies = 14
 Social organisation = 1
 State-formation = 1
 Technology = 1
 Trading = 13
 Urban life = 1
 Violence = 28
8. *Do you think the Viking heritage is supported as much as the Anglo-Saxon legacy in the South of England?*
 Yes = 8
 No = 34
 No opinion given = 1

Notes

1. S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent in Myth and History', *History* 88 (2003), pp. 186–203, at p. 194.
2. G. Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester, 2007), p. 175.
3. A. Wawn, *The Vikings and the Victorians: Inventing the Old North in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 30.
4. Wawn, *Vikings and the Victorians*, pp. 117–21 (quotation at p. 121).
5. Cubitt, *History and Memory*, p. 176.
6. D. Fimi, 'Tolkien and Old Norse Antiquity: Real and Romantic Links in Material Culture', in *Old Norse Made New: Essays on the Post-Medieval Reception of Old Norse Literature and Culture*, ed. D. Clark and C. Phelpstead (London, 2007), pp. 83–99, at p. 96.
7. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, (London, reset edn, 1999), pp. 311–20.
8. Fimi, 'Tolkien and Old Norse Antiquity', pp. 86–90.
9. J. Wasko, and G. Shanadi, 'More than Just Rings: Merchandise for them All', in *The Lord of the Rings: Popular Culture in Global Context*, ed. E. Mathijis (New York, 2006), p. 30. Analysis of the sales shows a great increase in the demand and purchase of Tolkien's literary work right after the movies were released. From the report, it can be inferred that the sales of these books between 1965 and 2001 were just below a million copies per annum, while right after the screening of *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001) up to *The Return of the King* (2003), the sales rise to around 7 million copies per annum.
10. C. Orrling, 'The Old Norse Dream', in *Vikings: the North Atlantic Saga*, ed. W. W. Fitzhugh and E. I. Ward (Washington and London, 2000), pp. 351–73, at pp. 362–63.
11. However, it is worth considering, as Karl Alvstad has pointed out to me, that the Norwegian resistance used at times their Viking heritage during the Second World War; K. Alvstad, 'Den Nasjonale Olav: Bruk og misbruk av helgenkongens bilde mellom 1920 og 1945' (publication forthcoming).
12. S. Sindbæk, 'All in the Same Boat. The Vikings as European and Global Heritage', in *Heritage Reinvents Europe: Proceedings of the Internationale Conference Ename, Belgium, 17–19 March 2011*, ed. D. Callebaut, J. Marik, and J. Marikova-kubkova (Jambes, 2013), pp. 81–87, at pp. 83–84.
13. P. Ingham, *Sovereign Fantasies: Arthurian Romance and the Making of Britain* (Philadelphia, 2001), pp. 71–91.
14. Sindbæk, 'All in the Same Boat', p. 84.
15. Wawn, *Vikings and Victorians*, p. 372.
16. Sindbæk, 'All in the Same Boat', pp. 87–88.
17. *Hildsvin* website <<http://www.hildsvin.co.uk/>> (accessed 7 Jan. 2014).
18. 'Local Vikings Bring History Alive', *BBC Local, Hampshire* (4 Dec. 2009), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/hampshire/hi/things_to_do/newsid_8393000/8393414.stm> (accessed 7 Jan., 2014).
19. For consideration of the historical evidence of Southampton's use as a Viking base, see R. Lavelle, 'Law, Death and Peacemaking in the "Second Viking Age": an Ealdorman, his King, and Some "Danes" in Wessex', above, p. 127, though note that the association is with Olaf Tryggvason rather than Swein. Furthermore, the fact that Swein is chosen for the group rather than the later tradition of an association with Cnut's attempts to turn back the tide at Southampton (whence 'Canute's Palace' and 'Canute House' at the location of the old docks get their names), is a demonstration of the way in which group-identity remains an issue of active choice.
20. B. Yorke, *The King Alfred Millenary in Winchester, 1901*, Hampshire Papers 17 (Winchester, 1999), p. 15.
21. Hampshire Record Office, 154M84W/61, reproduced in Yorke, *King Alfred Millenary*, p. 15.
22. J. Grigsby, *The Truth behind England's Oldest Legend: Beowulf & Grendel* (London, 2005), p. 44.
23. G. Fellows-Jensen, *The Vikings and their Victims: the Verdict of the Names*, The Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies, University College London, 21 February 1994 (London, 1995), p. 13. For other Danish-influenced place-names, see also C. P. Lewis, 'Danish Landowners in Wessex in 1066', above, p. 197 and n. 206.
24. See, e.g., J. D. Richards, *The English Heritage Book of Viking Age England* (London, 1994), p. 34.
25. B. Cunliffe, *Danebury: Anatomy of an Iron Age Hillfort* (London, 1983), p. 11, briefly discusses the early attributions of hillforts, although Cunliffe notes a move towards consideration of the Roman past in the eighteenth century.
26. Anonymous 'Young Lady', *Danebury: or the Power of Friendship, a Tale. With Two Odes* (Bristol, 1779), p. 21. I am grateful to Ryan Lavelle for drawing my attention to this source.
27. G. A. Cooke, *Topographical and Statistical Description of the County of Somerset* (London, 1820), p. 69.
28. For example there are the York Vikings Basketball Club, York Vikings' Junior Taekwondo team,

- the Yorkshire Vikings (cricket). In addition to the Yorkshire clubs, there are others in the north such as the Northumbria Vikings Cycle Speedway Club. Initial search undertaken using the *FreeIndex* business directory, <http://www.freeindex.co.uk/categories/arts_and_lifestyle/sports/>.
29. Coupland, 'Vikings on the Continent', p. 189.
 30. A. Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *The American History Review* 102 (1997), pp. 1386–403, at p. 1402.
 31. T. Cohen, 'The Viking Death Squads Who got a Taste of their Own Medicine: Mass Grave Shows How the Anglo-Saxons Hit Back at Invaders', *Daily Mail Online*, 25 Jan. 2012 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2091401>> (accessed 12 Mar. 2014)
 32. 'Dozens of Decapitated Bodies Found in Mass Roman War Grave Unearthed on the Route of Olympic Highway', *Daily Mail Online*, 11 Jun. 2009 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1192353>> (accessed 12 Mar. 2014).
 33. S. Churchward, 'Top draw – the Viking comic created by a Hampshire man', *Southern Daily Echo Online*, 5 Aug. 2013 <http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/10591830.Top_draw_the_Viking_comic_created_by_a_Hampshire_man/> (accessed 12 Mar. 2014).
 34. L. Céspedes González, Interview with Tim Hall, Nov.–Dec. 2013. I wish to thank Tim Hall for the interview and allowing the use of images for this paper, as well as providing a copy of the comic itself.
 35. I have developed this idea in further detail in my Masters dissertation, 'From Los Vikingos to Northlanders: Changing Representations of the Old Norse in Sequential Art' (MA dissertation, University of Winchester, 2013), as well as in my current PhD research at the University of Winchester, 'Medieval and Modern Representations of Old Norse Women'.
 36. A. Williams, 'Thorkell the Tall and the Bubble Reputation: the Vicissitudes of Fame', above, pp. 144–57.
 37. Published in English as M. Yukimura, *Vinland Saga*, Vol. 3 (New York, 2014).
 38. Only one individual who associated the Danes and the Norse together did not come from the Wessex region or had not been living there for a while.
 39. Wawn, *Vikings and Victorians*, p. 4.
 40. Interestingly, there is not a completely direct correlation between the negative perception and the participants who declared themselves to be from the south of England; nor is there completely positive feedback from northern respondents.
 41. J. Hermes, *Re-reading Popular Culture* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 2–5.
 42. Coupland, 'Vikings on the Continent', p. 186.
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For abbreviations, refer to the list at the start of the volume

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Index

(page references in italics refer to images)

- II Æthelred* (peace treaty) 126–7, 128, 129, 130, 132–3
 abbey/monastery 45, 145, 150, 158, 159, 161, 162–3, 166, 186–7, 192, 227, 228, 12, 24, 57, 58, 61, 64, 100, 162, 180, 184, 241
 Abbotsbury 158–9, 160, 161–3, 162, 164, 177
 Abingdon 158, 185, 186, 194
 Glastonbury 161, 179, 212, 218, 224, 226, 234
 Westminster 238, 241
 Ælfheah, Bishop/Archbishop of Canterbury 126–7, 130–1, 134, 146–8, 150, 215
 Ælfric, Ealdorman 123, 128–9, 130
 Æthelnoth, Ealdorman 128–9
 Æthelred II (the Unready) 2, 8, 14, 15, 23, 24, 42, 97, 114, 117–18, 126–7, 128, 129, 131, 134, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150, 152, 154, 161, 162, 175, 177, 185, 197, 215, 216, 217, 224, 226, 230, 236, 237
 Æthelstan, King 8, 12, 63, 165, 234
 Æthelweard, Ealdorman 4, 5, 10, 13, 56, 57, 60, 62, 64, 122–34
 Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 10, 13, 123, 124
 Chronicon 10, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 134
 Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester 213–4, 215, 218
 Æthelwold *rex paganorum* (King of the Pagans) 2, 40–1, 53 n70, 136 n15
 Æthelwulf, King 45, 224, 228
 Alfred (the Great), King 2, 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 24, 35, 39, 40–1, 45, 48, 58, 59–61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 74, 78, 79, 87, 97, 126, 128, 131, 132, 252, 258
 burial 213, 217, 224
 Alfred–Guthrum treaty 8–9
 Andover, Hampshire, Treaty of 126–31, 134
Angelcynn(es) 1, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 25, 56, 123, 127
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 9, 10–11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21, 35, 36–7, 38, 39, 40, 44, 42, 43, 48, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 70, 79, 86 n51, 114, 117, 123, 124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 133, 134, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 213, 218
Annal(e)s
 Cambriæ 43
 Regni Francorum (Royal Frankish) 11, 57–8
 St Bertin 11
 St Neots 10–11, 56
 Ulster 57, 64
 Winchester 218, 234
 see also Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
- archbishop of Canterbury
 Æthelnoth 126
 Lanfranc 150
 Sigeric 129
 Arctic Circle 1, 10, 113
 armies 62, 71, 76, 77, 79, 83
 Anglo-Saxon/English 35, 38, 42, 43, 49, 63, 74, 75, 76, 79, 185
 camp/winter quarters 41, 45, 48, 59, 60, 61, 62–3, 64, 87, 88, 97, 99, 102, 103, 127, 130, 146, 147
 Danish/Viking 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 38, 40, 42, 45, 48, 49, 56, 58–65, 74, 87, 88, 93, 97, 99, 100, 102, 103, 114, 117, 123, 127, 132, 145, 146, 147, 148 149, 159, 177
 West Saxon 42, 43, 59–62, 63, 64–5, 76
 Asser (*Vita Alfredi*) 8, 40, 41, 48, 58, 59–60, 62, 63, 124, 128
 Azur, son of Thorth 179, 180–2, 181, 188, 192, 198
 battle(field)/battlefield archaeology 4, 11, 35–49, 59, 62, 63, 71, 74, 82, 83, 114, 115, 116, 131, 146, 148, 149, 151–2
 Eðandun/Epandun (Edington, Wiltshire) 45–9, 46–7, 63, 79, 87, 103, 124, 252, 253
 Hastings 194
 Bayeux Tapestry 19, 215, 217
 beacon 73, 77–8, 83, 124
 Beaduheard 56, 80, 123–4
 Bede 7, 12–13, 41, 43, 150
 Beorn, Earl burial/tomb/remains 212, 213, 217, 219, 222, 223, 223, 224, 225–7, 226, 228, 229, 236, 237, 238, 241
Beowulf 13, 42, 44–5, 216
 bishop/bishopric 8, 18, 25, 64, 128, 129, 130, 147, 148, 149, 152, 160, 161, 165, 173, 179, 180, 202, 203, 223, 251
 of Sherborne 65, 160, 162
 of Winchester 65, 191, 192, 197, 213, 214, 217, 218–9, 220, 222–3, 222, 226, 228–9, 231–2, 233, 236–8
 bone objects 18
 Bovi 158, 159, 160, 163, 177
 Burghal Hidage 40, 60, 62, 64, 70, 71, 76, 81
burh 21, 39, 40, 43, 60, 62, 64, 65, 70, 77, 80, 87, 132, 147, 161, 213
 burial 5, 15, 16, 17, 19–21, 20, 22, 42, 44, 98, 99, 101, 164, 254
 decapitated/executed 14, 109, 111, 112–13 112, 115, 116–20, 119, 122, 126, 131
 in/close to prehistoric monuments 44, 48, 116, 119
 mass 8, 14–15, 36, 109–20, 110, 112, 119, 131, 133, 254, 255

- burial *continued*
 prehistoric 107, 109
 royal 19, 212–41
- Canterbury, Kent 2, 8, 17, 18, 25, 126, 129, 145, 146, 147, 150, 151, 164, 173, 215
- Carhampton, Somerset 58–9, 65
- Charlemagne 57–8, 64–5, 132, 133,
- Charles the Bald, King 63, 95
- Cheddar, Somerset 65, 130–1
- Christian/Christianity 3, 9–12, 17, 18–20, 41, 59, 60, 63, 65, 129–31, 161, 177, 216, 227
 baptism 9, 11, 63, 128, 129–30, 175, 176
- Cnut ‘the Great’ 2, 3, 14, 15–16, 17, 19, 20–1, 22, 23–5, 24, 34 n172, 65, 114, 126, 144–5, 148–50, 151, 154 n30, 155 n52, 158–9, 160, 161, 165, 172, 175, 176, 177, 178, 180, 187, 188, 191, 196, 197, 215, 216, 217, 224–6, 230
 burial/remains 18, 212, 213, 217, 219, 220, 223, 224, 226–7, 228, 231–3, 233, 234, 236–7, 238, 239, 239, 241
- coffin 16, 19, 217–8, 222, 224, 225, 227, 227, 241
- coin 2, 14, 17, 37, 56, 63, 64, 94, 96, 97, 103, 174, 192, 196
 foreign (as bullion) 94–7, 100, 103
 hoard 14, 94–5
 Roman 19, 20
- Cynuit* 40, 62, 65, 124, 125
- Danelaw 1, 2, 9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 25, 71, 87, 88, 89, 92, 95, 97, 98, 100, 103, 144, 146, 172, 173, 174, 176, 178, 179, 183, 184, 188, 196–7, 198, 250, 258
- Denmark 1, 2, 19, 57, 90, 93, 115, 125, 145, 148, 149, 150, 151, 161, 175, 176, 177, 196, 198, 215, 216, 217, 219, 221, 228, 229, 234, 236, 237, 238, 251
- diploma 145, 147, 149, 158–9, 161–3
- Domesday 5, 73, 158, 159–60, 161, 164, 172–9, 182, 184, 185, 188, 193–6, 198, 199–202
- ealdormen (also *duces*) 3, 7, 40, 62, 122–34, 148, 149, 236
 Ælfric 123, 128–9, 130
 Æthelnoth 128–9
 Æthelweard 4, 5, 10, 13, 56, 57, 60, 62, 64, 122–34
 Odda/Oda (also Æthelwine) 5, 62, 124–5
- East Anglia 7, 8, 9, 21, 59, 63–4, 76, 80, 92, 126, 129, 146, 148, 149, 159, 179
- Eðandun/Epandun* (Edington, Wiltshire), battle of 45–9, 46–7, 63, 79, 87, 103, 124, 252, 253
- Edgar, King 8, 65, 114, 125, 129, 134, 163, 234
- Edmund Ironside, King 11, 21, 23–4, 114, 149, 161, 197
 burial 212, 223, 223, 224–7, 225, 229, 234
- Edward the Confessor, King 23, 24, 25, 127, 134, 158, 159, 160, 161, 165, 176, 177, 179, 180, 182, 184, 189, 192, 196, 197, 212, 223, 226, 228, 230, 238, 241
- Edward the Elder, King 2, 9, 41, 58, 64–5, 69 n115, 95, 114, 126, 213, 228
- Egbert, King 48, 58–9, 79
- elite 5, 17, 23, 98, 178
 Anglo–Danish 5, 18, 21–2
 Danish 3, 5, 16, 18
 fighters/warriors 175, 177
- Scandinavian 4, 16, 23
 West Saxon 3, 39, 41
- Emma, Queen 19, 24, 25, 145, 150, 154 n30, 161, 197, 215, 216, 217, 219, 222, 222, 229
 burial/remains 212, 213, 217, 220, 223, 224, 226–7, 228, 231, 231–3, 232–3, 233, 236, 237–8, 239, 241
Encomium 145, 149–50, 151, 152, 154 n30
- excavation 48, 58, 60, 62, 77, 93
 Ridgeway Hill, Dorset, mass grave 8, 14–15, 109–20, 110, 112, 119, 131–4, 133, 254
 Winchester 17–18, 19, 20, 94, 212
 Winchester, Old Minster 14, 18, 212, 213, 227
- execution 8, 14, 15, 113, 114, 116–20, 118, 122, 126, 131–4, 256
- Exeter 15, 59, 60–1, 64, 88, 102, 164–5, 177, 192, 202
- fellowship/allegiance/guild (*fēlageschipe*) 21
- fortified places/strongholds 38–42, 43, 54 n78, 60, 62, 64, 69 n115, 70–1, 74, 76–7, 82–3, 87, 124–5, 132, 161
see also burh
- Fox, Richard, Bishop of Winchester 222, 223, 230–2, 236–8, 239, 241
 reliquary chest 218, 219, 222, 223, 223, 224, 227, 228, 229–34, 231–3, 236–9
- Franks/Frankish 9, 10
- frieze 19, 176, 215–7, 215
- funerary monument 37–8, 48
- Godwine, Earl of Wessex, and family 7–8, 25, 26 n7, 176, 177, 180, 192, 197
- grave 14, 109
 of Gunni 19–22, 20
 grave goods 14, 19, 96, 97–8, 99, 101
 mass 8, 14–15, 36, 109–20, 110, 112, 119, 131, 133, 254, 255
 royal 19, 212–41
 slab/marker/monument 16, 20–3, 20, 22, 22, 23, 37–8, 48, 217, 224, 225, 226–7, 229, 241
see also tomb
- guild 21, 163–6
- Guthrum, Viking leader 8, 59–60, 61, 62, 63–4, 74, 79, 126, 128, 129, 130
 Alfred–Guthrum treaty 8–9
- Hamwic* *see* Southampton 2, 3, 6
- Harold, Earl 158, 173, 179, 180, 194, 197, 202
- Harold I (Harefoot), King 18, 175, 177, 183, 234
- Harthacnut, King 18, 25, 150, 155 n52, 158, 165, 175, 177, 186, 196, 224, 230
 burial 18, 212, 213, 222, 223, 226, 228, 229, 231, 232, 234, 236, 237, 238–41, 240
- Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester 218–9, 224, 228–9
- hillfort 39, 40, 41, 45, 47, 48, 62, 124, 161, 253–4
- hoard 14, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98
 coin 14, 94–5
- hostage 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 114, 126, 127–8, 148 *see also* ransom
- housecarl 15, 18, 22–3, 158, 159, 160, 165, 175, 177, 179, 184, 185, 188, 189, 196, 198,

- identity, group/ethnic 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8–25, 36, 49, 122, 165, 173, 176, 197, 250–2, 254, 255, 257, 258
- Iron Age 114, 255
 hillfort 39, 40, 41, 45, 47, 48, 62, 124, 161, 253–4
 pit 111, 113, 116
 pottery 60, 109, 111, 113
- Iutae*/Jutes 7, 12–13
- Jellinge style ornament 14, 17, 91
- John of Worcester 42, 145, 148, 150, 152, 213
- John the Dane 188, 190, 197, 202–3
- Klak, Harald 9–10, 11, 130
- land holding/owners 2, 5, 7–8, 158–66, 172–203, 181
 great landowners 188–91, 190, 196
Königslandschaften 8
 magnates 179–88, 181, 196
 peasants and burgesses 194–6
 thegns 191–4, 196
- lawcode 45, 56
- London 2, 4, 17, 23–4, 25, 42, 76, 109, 127, 146, 147, 148, 150, 164, 165, 185, 197, 212, 231, 234, 256
- Louis the Pious, Emperor 11, 59, 63, 126, 130
- Mærleswein, 179, 183–4, 188, 198
- marriage, royal/political 8, 12, 19, 56, 60, 129, 151, 152, 161, 176, 197, 216, 215, 216, 217, 226, 238
- massacre 116, 118, 134, 152
 St Brice's day 15, 117–8, 152
- memorial stone/inscription 16, 18, 19–23, 20, 22, 165, 217–9 224, 225, 226, 228–31, 230–2, 236, 239
- mercenaries 15, 59, 114, 115, 117, 130, 165
- Mercia/Mercians 2, 7, 9, 13, 42, 48, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 74, 80, 97, 144, 148, 149, 159, 179, 182, 191, 197
- metalwork 14, 16, 18, 23, 99, 102, 102, 113
 horse equipment 18, 77, 98–100, 99
 Scandinavian (-style) 4, 87–103, 88–92, 94, 96, 101
 belt/baldric/sword belt fittings 21, 89–92, 89–92, 98, 98, 103, 116
 brooches 88–91, 88, 90–1, 92, 98, 99, 100, 103
 bullion (gold/silver) 92–6, 95, 103, 105 n35, 108 n112
see also coins
 dress accessories 88–92, 88–92, 98, 99, 100, 101
 knife 14
 ring/arm-ring 93–4, 94, 100, 102, 105 n35, n37
 sword 14, 18, 101
 weight 96–8, 96, 100
- Nigelus, Ermoldus 11, 130
- Norway 10, 16, 56, 58, 89, 92, 97, 99, 100, 126, 129, 145, 151, 198, 236, 238
- Odda/Oda (also Æthelwine), Ealdorman 5, 62, 124–5
- Ohthere, Norwegian chieftain 2, 10, 13
- Old Danish 173, 194, 198
- Old English 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 20, 21, 23, 41, 42, 48, 64–5, 72, 80, 116–7, 131, 132, 133, 146, 152, 159, 173, 174–5, 184, 198, 202, 213, 216, 217
- Old Norse 8, 14, 20, 21, 22, 123, 160, 174, 184, 194, 198, 199, 200, 202, 203 n1, 216, 217, 251, 255
- Orc (also Orcy) of Abbotsbury 158–9, 160, 161–3, 162, 165–6
- Oxford, Oxfordshire 15, 76, 116, 117, 146, 148, 177, 213
- place-name evidence 4, 13, 16, 21, 71, 74, 77, 79, 80, 133, 161, 184, 194, 253, 254, 259
 for battlefield 35, 36–8, 45, 62, 82 *see also* *Eðandun*
- poet/poetry/skaldic verse 19, 44, 45, 144–5, 148–9, 151, 176, 216, 251
Eiríksdrápa 145
Höfudlausn 145
Liðsmannaflókkur 145, 148
Vikingavísur 145
- politics 18, 57, 122, 125, 130–1, 134, 144, 166
- peacemaking/-makers 122, 126, 130 *see also* Æthelweard
II Æthelred (peace treaty) 126–7, 128, 129, 130, 132–3
 Alfred–Guthrum treaty 8–9
 Treaty of Andover 126–31, 134
- Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) 87, 92, 101, 102
- Portland, Dorset 10, 56–8, 114, 123, 133, 133
- pottery 56, 58, 60
 Iron Age 60, 109, 113
 Roman 60, 109, 111, 113
- radiocarbon date 109, 113, 114, 117, 132, 255
- ransom 64, 97, 147
- Reading, Berkshire 14, 88, 101, 124, 228
- reliquary chest 218, 219, 222, 223, 223, 224, 227, 228, 229–34, 231–3, 236–9
- Richard, son of William I, burial/tomb of 219, 222–3, 223, 224, 225–7, 226, 227, 228, 229
- Ridgeway Hill mass burial, Weymouth, Dorset 8, 14–15, 109–20, 110, 112, 119, 131–4, 133, 254
- decapitation/execution 112–3 112, 115, 116, 122, 126
 excavation 107–12, 110
 filed teeth 115
 injuries on skeletons 113, 114, 115, 117, 132
 radiocarbon dating 109, 113, 114, 117, 131, 255
 Isotopes 113–4, 115, 117, 120
- Ringerike style 14
- roads and route-ways 71–7, 72–3, 83, 109, 111, 116, 134, 254
herepæð, *herestræt*, *hereweg* 72–5, 73, 75, 77–8
 Roman 71–4, 111, 183
 prehistoric 71–2, 73–6
- Roman 22, 41, 42, 49, 56, 58, 59, 97, 109, 255
 battles 42
 bullion/coin 19, 20, 96
 fort/settlement 39–40, 60–3, 71, 74, 111
 pit 111, 113, 116
 pottery 60, 109, 111, 113
 road 71–4, 111, 183
 writers 1, 10
- rune/rune stone 16, 20, 22–3, 22, 145, 146, 158, 165, 217
- saga 151, 176, 216, 251, 256 *see also* poet/poetry
Jómsvíkinga saga 117, 151–2
Legendary Saga of King Olaf 151, 152
Volsunga saga 19, 215, 216
- St Brice's day massacre 15, 117–8, 152

- sculpture *see* stone sculpture
- settlement(s) 17, 21, 37, 38, 45, 58, 71, 73, 77, 101, 111, 127, 130, 177
 Danish 12, 17, 21, 87, 159, 165, 166, 172, 174, 194, 196, 197, 259
 Roman 39, 40, 71
 Scandinavian 4, 9, 87, 88, 96, 100, 103
- ship 2, 10, 40, 42, 56, 57, 60–5, 124, 126, 127, 131–2, 134–5, 145–6, 147, 148, 165, 241, 259
 crew 114, 127, 131, 132, 133, 134–5
- Sigvaldi 151–2
- Southampton, Hampshire 2, 127, 130, 131, 188, 196, 252, 255, 255
Hamwic 2, 3, 6
- sponsor(ship) 63, 126, 127–9
- Stable Isotopes 113–4, 115, 117, 120
- stone sculpture/monument 16–17, 18–19, 20–3, 20, 22, 24, 215–7, 215, 229–30, 230, 238
- Sturluson, Snorri (*Heimskringla*) 18, 151, 152
- Sweden 89, 91, 100, 115, 145, 146, 165
- Swein Forkbeard, Danish king 2, 24, 42, 65, 114, 126, 127, 129, 148, 149, 151, 176, 177, 234, 236, 252
- territory 7, 8–10, 43, 203, 256
- thegns 62, 63, 124, 133, 148, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 173, 174, 177, 178–9, 180, 182, 185, 188, 189, 191–4, 196, 197, 202,
- Tholf the Dane 188, 189, 190, 198–203
- Thorkell the Tall 4, 145–152, 256, 256
- Tole of Tolpuddle 158, 160–3
- tomb 40, 48, 49, 213, 214, 216, 222–3, 223, 224, 226–8, 225–7, 230, 231, 232, 236, 238, 239, 240–1, 240 *see also* grave
- Towton, mass grave 36, 116
- trade/traders 14, 56–7, 92, 95, 98, 100, 103, 132, 165, 257, 258, 259
- tribute 98, 147
- Tryggvason, Olaf 5, 126–9, 151
- Ubbe and Ívarr (the Boneless) 8, 62–3, 64
- Viking
 army/‘Great Army’ 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 38, 40, 42, 45, 48, 49, 56, 58–65, 74, 87, 88, 93, 97, 99, 100, 102, 103, 114, 117, 123, 127, 132, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 159, 177
 modern legacy 250–59, 253, 255–8
 raids/incursions 2, 3–4, 7, 9, 14, 17, 35, 38, 40–3, 45, 55–83, 57, 87–8, 97, 98, 100, 102, 114, 124–5, 132–3, 134, 145–8, 150–2, 250, 257, 259
- Viking Age, First 2, 4, 56, 87, 103, 144
- Viking Age, Second 2, 4, 5, 122–35
- violence 3–4, 8, 14, 15, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 44–5, 48, 116, 257, 259
- Wallingford, Oxfordshire 71–2, 76, 77, 177, 179, 184, 185, 196
- Wareham, Dorset 59–61, 63, 88, 97, 98–9, 98, 100, 102–3, 126, 202, 234
- warfare 3–4, 35–49, 56–65, 70–80, 114, 122, 132, 165, 176
 campaign 2, 4, 16, 57, 59, 71, 77, 78, 79–80, 127, 129, 132, 145–6, 148–50, 176, 197
 infrastructure 71–77
 intelligence 77–9
 mobilisation 71, 79–80, 83
 muster/mustering 45, 48, 62, 79–80, 81, 82, 83, 146
- weaponry *see* metalwork
- Wedmore, Somerset 128, 130–1
- Westminster Abbey 179, 186, 212, 228, 234, 238, 241
- William I (the Conqueror), King 161, 183, 184, 192, 199, 219, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227–8, 234
- William II (Rufus), King, burial of 220, 222, 223, 227, 231, 232, 233, 234, 236–7
- William d’Eu 160, 198–201
- William of Malmesbury 8, 39, 123, 150, 161, 226
- Winchester 2–3, 7, 10, 14, 17–25, 20, 22, 23, 40, 71, 94, 95, 100, 103, 126, 130, 131, 132, 148, 164, 175, 176, 182, 188, 192, 196, 197, 202
- Annals* 218
- bishop of 65, 191, 192, 197, 213, 214, 217, 218–9, 220, 222–3, 222, 226, 228–9, 231–2, 233, 236–8
 Ælfwine 25, 228, 229, 232, 233, 237
 Stigand 191, 197, 231, 232
 Wine 232, 233, 237
- cathedral 5, 176, 212–4, 213, 217–34 222
 reliquary chest 218, 219, 222, 223, 223, 224, 227, 228, 229–34, 231–3, 236–9
 reliquary of St Swithin 220, 222, 223, 227, 228, 236, 237
 royal burials 219–49, 220
 translation of burials to 217–22, 223, 224, 226–7, 229, 234, 236, 237, 238, 241
- excavation 17–18, 19, 20, 94, 212
- New Minster 12, 24–5, 24, 192, 213, 214
 royal burials 213, 217, 224, 228, 234
- Old Minster 2, 18–19, 20, 21, 23, 24–5, 65, 176, 177, 192, 212, 213–22, 213–4, 227
 excavation 14, 18, 212, 213, 227
 original tomb of St Swithin 214, 217, 219
 royal burials 18, 212–22, 221, 224, 226, 228, 229, 236–9
 sculpture 215–6, 215
- Royal palace 18, 23, 24
- Yatesbury, Wiltshire 72–3, 77, 78, 78
- York 18, 21, 23, 59, 61, 64, 93, 102, 183, 252, 254